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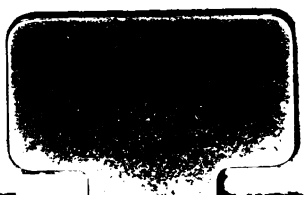

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

ROBERT ROBINSON,

LATE PASTOR OF THE

BAPTIST CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

OF

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,

AT

CAMBRIDGE;

IN FOUR VOLUMES:

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED

BRIEF MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

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ARCANA:

OR THE

PRINCIPLES

OF THE LATE

PETITIONERS TO PARLIAMENT, FOR RELIEF IN THE MATTER OF SUBSCRIPTION.

IN EIGHT LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

What shall de honest man do in my closet?
Dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.
SHAKESPEARE.

[FIRST PRINTED, 1774.]

PREFACE.

THE present state of religion in Britain pretty much resembles its state-policy when the Romans invaded and enslaved it. This island was then divided into several petty-states, and all the strength of those states was employed in securing each against its neighbour; so that when the Romans, the common enemy came, they were too feeble to resist long, and bowed to the imperial yoke. To this divided state of the country, Tacitus, an almost cotemporary historian, ascribes the Roman success. Nec aliud adversus validissimas gentes pro nobis utilius, quam quod *in commune non consulunt. Rarus* duabus tribusve civitatibus ad propulsandum commune periculum *conventus:* ita DUM SINGULI PUGNANT, UNIVERSI VINCUNTUR. (In Vit. Agric. cap. xii.)* Christianity is indeed

* Nothing contributes more to the success of our arms against the most warlike nations, than their want of unanimity. They do do not consult together. Very rarely do two or three cities confer together on resisting the common enemy. So that *while each fights, all are conquered.*

the religion of the British empire; but christianity divided into parties, and each party employs its learning, eloquence, fortune, and influence, to prevent the incroachment of another party, to enervate its neighbour, and invigorate itself. While this is doing, ignorance and immorality, stupidity and luxury, overflow all bounds; and, to the grief of every good man, overwhelm all orders and degrees of men. A general coalition may seem a romantic notion, and the attempt would be found extravagant in the hands of inferior people; but would legislators condescend to make the trial, the case would widely differ, and there would be more than a probability of success. Mankind have a few first principles in them, the dictates of nature, and the bases of all exterior works; in these, as in their features, they agree much more than some are aware of; and hence a common consent about a thousand things never regulated by law. Christianity is an address to these principles, and not a dispute about words and modes subversive of religion and morality.

Let any impartial inquirer take up the holy scriptures, and ask, whither do all the contents of these ancient writings tend? History, prophecy, miracles, the ceremonies of the old, and the reasonings of the new testament; the legislation of Moses, and the mission of Jesus Christ; to what do they all tend? What is their aim? The proper answer would be, their *professed* end is to give *glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and benevolence among men.* Grand design! Foun-

ded on the surest principles, the perfections of God; painted in all the finely-coloured imagery of the prophets; sometimes reigning in all the solidity of reason; sometimes rolling in all the majesty of song: here, glimmering in a type; there, blazing in a promise; yonder, set to music by angelic spirits themselves. Now, to be a christian, is neither more nor less than to concur with this design: so much of this, so much true religion, the rest is *vox præteraque nihil.* * False religions are selfish, this is social; and its sociableness is at once its proof and its praise

The end, to make men *beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks,* to make *every man sit under his vine, and his fig-tree, and none make them afraid;*—this end is so desirable that all wish to obtain it; the only question is, what are the proper means of obtaining this end? One sect of Christians proposes oaths, subscriptions to creeds, fines, and imprisonments: another proceeds to execrations, corporeal punishments, and death, in various frightful shapes, itself. The present petitioners, supposing these means contrary to the nature of things, contrary also to the means prescribed by the founder of religion, and, perceiving that the prophets ascribe these happy days to *the word of the Lord,* which was to *go forth from Jerusalem,* propose the abolition of the present penal means, and the introduction of the original, mild, and placid mode

* *Nothing but a noise.*

of tuition. The reasonableness of the pretensions of each side is under examination.

Several excellent pieces have been published on this subject; to them these letters do not pretend to add any thing: their only aim is to expose to public view the grounds and PRINCIPLES of those publications. By a strange oversight in readers, the real principles of this controversy are mistaken. A statesman suspects civil faction; a trinitarian complains of arianism; a calvinist urges the looseness of arminianism; an arminian the intolerance of calvinism. Surprising! Was the dispute about a DOCTRINE, the divinity of Christ, and predestination might be canvassed, but the dispute is about church DISCIPLINE. For shame gentlemen, don't mistake the question; the question is not WHAT, but WHY the church believes? whether by compulsion or choice? People thought you had studied a body of divinity, and were well versed in logic, and do you confound the *agenda* with the *credenda*? * Church-government with church-doctrine? Differ as much or as long as you will about doctrine, you are obliged to be of the same principles in discipline and government; unitarian and trinitarian have nothing to do here.

If the principles of the petitioners, contained in these letters, be reduced to one single axiom, it may be expressed in Aristotle's ΤΟ ΚΑΤΑ ΦΥΣΙΝ ΗΔΥ. —*That only can please which accords with nature.* The application of this principle to church

* Rules of *practice* with articles of *belief*.

government is attempted in these letters; for why NATURE should be allowed the supreme censor in all other cases, and not in legislation, cannot be easily accounted for. In justice to the subject, the reader will be so kind as to distinguish nature as *created*, from nature as *corrupted*: the latter is the luxuriance, the former the perfection and excellence of whatever exists.

As every sensible object relates to some sense of the body, and is regulated by that sense, so every intellectual object relates to some operation of the mind, and that operation is its sole and sufficient judge. Should a master of sound read or sing to an illiterate countryman the last part of the xivth, and the first of the xvth. book of Homer's Iliad, very likely the music of the language would as much exhilerate Hodge as an Italian opera does some of his superiors, who understand as much Italian as he does Greek. But now tell him the poet's meaning: inform him that Homer is speaking about God Almighty and his wife; that, two armies being at war upon earth, God, whom the poet calls Jupiter, favoured one, and his wife, named Juno, the other; that the subtle wife, not being able to succeed by force, tried stratagem, and, by the help of a magic girdle, and a little under-god of all work, first inspired her husband with lust, and then laid him fast asleep; that while he slept she did a world of mischief to her husband's favourite army; that on his awaking a violent quarrel ensued; on his part high words and threatning blows, on her's a fund of treachery and

a heap of lies. What says Clumsy to this? He pities its ignorance, or blames its profaneness: he is more moved with horror at the sense, than he had been with pleasure at the sound. He is, as he ought to be, delighted with the one and disgusted with the other. But how so? He neither understands a gamut nor a creed: of mythology he never heard, and to the truth of theology he never swore. True, but NATURE judges. He has ears accessible to the power of harmony; and he has the art of associating or separating ideas in his mind, without knowing any thing about anatomy or ontology. Certain combinations of sound form a harmony which delights his sense of hearing; he calls it music: certain combinations of intellectual objects, which nature does not, cannot associate, such as *God* and *sleep*, shock that operation of his mind called reason, he instantly perceives its incongruity, is disgusted with it, and calls it wickedness.

It might be easily proved that not only arts and sciences, metaphysical and mathematical productions, as they originate in the supreme spirit, so they address themselves to the image of that supreme spirit, man: but even theology in all its branches might thus be pursued from the perfections of the infinite to the operations of a finite being: and that operation to which each addressed itself would be found the best and only judge. Nothing proves the divinity of christianity more than such a comparison; it is the only religion in the world that will bear such a trial. There is not one natural operation of the mind but has its

object in this religion; nor one object but assorts with its operation. This is not the place to pursue such a subject. Let it suffice to add, jurisprudence is perfect in proportion as it fits the nature of man, and universal toleration in matters of conscience is a tendency towards that perfection: *Sub judice lis est.**

If these letters be intitled *the principles of the petitioners*, it is not because they are published by the knowledge or consent of the petitioners, but because they contain what the writer takes to be the real sentiments of those gentlemen. If their principles be called *secret*, it is not because the gentlemen concerned in petitioning have kept them so, but because people seem not to have taken sufficient care to understand what they have published; and therefore plead for and against they know not what. These letters were first written for the private use of an intimate friend, and are now, with a few alterations, made public only for the sake of diffusing right notions of religious liberty among plain people; for whose sakes also the outlandish phrases are translated: for these reasons little or no notice, except in the last letter is taken about the controversies among the petitioners themselves. It may not be improper however to add a word or two on that subject here.

One set of ministers believe that the magistate hath an authority to require a religious test, and they also approve of the test, which he does re-

* *The cause is before the judge.*

quire.—These gentlemen subscribe the articles conscientiously, and have no other concern in petitioning than to obtain for their brethren the same liberty which themselves enjoy, that is, a freedom from penal laws.

A second class own the magistate's authority to require a test, but dislike, because they disbelieve, the present test; and ask to be freed from subscribing any thing but the holy scriptures. Though this be the substance of both the petitions presented by the established and dissenting clergy, yet whoever would understand the merits of the cause must observe that the *same* request by different men produces two very *different* questions. With the ministers of the established church the question is, has a christian church a right to require any religious test of *her own* ministers? But with the dissenting clergy the question is, has one christian church a right to force her creed on the ministers of *another* christian church? Ought the Greek church to impose her creed on the church of Rome? Ought the church of England to force her's on the church of Scotland? and *vice versa*.

A third class, without inquiring into the nature of the test, wholly deny the magistrate's authority to require any religious test at all. The far greater part of those that have petitioned for a change of the test from human articles to the holy scriptures, are said to be of this number. Some indeed (as it is reported) have taxed them with inconsistency, and even with dishonesty, for asking a right of a power which they disown. But these charges are

cruel and ungenerous, and they might just as well undertake to prove that Brutus or Cicero betrayed the cause of civil liberty because they chose different means of procuring it. Cicero makes this just distinction. *My general view, Brutus,* says this great man, *with regard to public affairs, has always been the same with yours; though my* MEASURES *in some particular cases have been perhaps a little more vehement.* Epist. V. *I take it,* says he in another letter to Brutus, *to be the part of him, who acts as one of the leaders in state affairs, to insure even the* PRUDENCE *of his measures to the public: and for my part, since I have assumed so much to myself, as to take the steerage of the republic into my hands, I should not think myself less culpable, if I should draw the senate into any thing* IMPERTINENTLY, than if I *had driven them into it* TREACHEROUSLY. Epist. VIII. It is a good remark of Dr. Middleton's, that, though Cicero had blamed, in a letter to Atticus, an action of Brutus, and applauded in the senate that same action, yet there was nothing inconsistent in his conduct. *But,* says the Dr. *with a proper allowance for different circumstances, this will be found intirely consistent; and both the one and the other perfectly agreeable to Cicero's character: first, to give the best advice to Brutus that he was able; and if that was rejected, then to make the best construction, and the best use of the measures, which Brutus chose to pursue.* Why have not christians as much charity for their brethren, as Cicero a heathen had for his?

Various are the lights in which this controversy may be considered, and each has its peculiar advantage, though his measures will be noblest who considers it in *every point* of view. To those that love to trace things to their principles it may be considered *philosophically;* if a philosophical *datum* be hurt it falls. To others a *theological* discussion would be most eligible; if any doctrine of christianity be injured it would destroy itself. Some view it in a *civil* light, and as in a free state every individual has a proportional interest in laws that affect his conscience, as a proprietor of lands has in acts for the inclosure of a field, or the drainage of a fen, it would be happy if men valued their consciences as they value their wastes or their bogs. To others, again, a *historical* deduction would elucidate best. And, (by the bye) it is pity but some gentleman of learning and leisure, who also has a free access to registers, records, and manuscripts, would give the public a faithful and candid *history of the British church* from the remotest to the present times. Such a history, composed on some such plan as *Velly's History of France,* would be a most agreeable present to his country. A thousand interesting events would appear, a thousand lively anecdotes would occur, a thousand rational reflections would be interspersed: truth would narrate her travels in the grave and the gay, and readers would be driven either to place religion less in words and disputes, modes and forms, and more in its scripture essence, *love to God and man;* or

to " *slaunder their auncestors by deliuering them* " *over to the deuil of hel.*"

But let the subject be viewed in what light soever it will, the reformation will be allowed a good and laudable work; and the reformation allowed, the principles of the petitioners cannot be denied. The most that can be doubted is their prudence; and could any imprudencies of individuals be proved, the goodness of their designs would be a sufficient apology. Yet where is the imprudence of wishing felicity to the crown by contenting the state, piety to the church by gradually meliorating the spirits of her members? Who would hesitate a moment about which he should accept, had he the offer of governing a college or keeping a jail? Intolerance makes churches and states resemble the last.

Others have laboured, and we have entered into their labours, is the thankful acknowledgment of thousands in Britain. With a mixture of horror and pleasure, as men on the beach view a tempest at sea, they ken the gloomy papal storm, at first vapouring in the brain of a proud priest, then louring in the features of a surly synod, anon communicating itself to the state, then bellowing at the bar, thundering in the church, lightning at the stake, dreadfully and unmercifully overwhelming their pious predecessors in every imaginable distress. Yet with the highest satisfaction they behold their grandsires weather the point, outlive the storm, and bring the vessel, though all shattered and torn, into the harbour: Harry the eighth him-

self declaring, *as we haue abrogated all olde popish traditions in this our realme, so, if the grace of God forsake us not, we will well foreses, that* NO NEWE NAUGHTIE TRADITIONS BE MADE WITH OUR CONSENT, TO BLINDE US OR OUR REALME. This was in 1538, but his majesty had forgotten this when he hoisted the six articles, and in 1540 put to sea again.

While a work so interesting to the properties, the morals, the religion and lives of mankind was in agitation; amidst so many touching scenes of exquisite distress; would that man have been well employed, who, instead of promoting so noble a work, had faddled away his time in exposing the supposed weaknesses of his brethren? He might have written a dissertation on buffoonery against Mr. Wishart, for saying, in his zeal against popery, that *a priest at mass resembled a fox wagging his tail in July.* Or an essay on impatience, exemplified in a peevish sick brother, who, having repeated 20 *pater-nosters* before a rood at Madge Pattens for the recovery of his health, and finding himself no better, exclaimed *a foule euil take you and all other images!* Or he might have exercised his talent on the illustrious John Fox for *profaneness*, because, when the priests affirmed that the mass obtained the remission of sins, he replied, *what the Masse! In the deuil's name for what intent then died Christe?* He might have affected a hundred common-place sober see-saws: he might have said, "venerable father Fox, you are confessedly a great man, but you are betraying the

cause back again to the papists; the reformation hath hitherto been carried on in *God's name*, and do you call in *the devils?* Beside father, you are inconsistent with yourself, you chafe and redden, contrary to your usual humorous jocularity, particularly that with which you pleaded bishop Hooper's cause, when you complained that *he was forced to weare a mathematicall, geometriall, that is a foure squared cap, the foure angles deuiding the worlde into foure partes, albeit that his head was rounde:* there is no uniformity in your conduct father, you are a traitor to the cause." Mr. Fox perhaps would have answered, brother, it is an ill bird that bewrays its own nest: *there is a reason to every purpose under heaven:* you cannot comprehend my views unless your capacity was equal to mine: in weakening our hands you strengthen our opponents: this is, *to go over to the aduersarye and to turne the cat in the panne: but heere,* in your conduct he would add, *a man may see what man is of himselfe, when God's good humble spirit lacketh to be his guide."*

In fine: different men according to their different capacities, prejudices, or interests, will see the subject in different lights, and, without tainting their integrity, will adopt different measures of action. If a zealot be alarmed for his creed, it is because he thinks his creed essential to the happiness of his country. If one patiently and prudently endeavors to get rid of a grievance by degrees, and another resolutely refuses to ask any relief till he can obtain all, they differ only as two

creditors differ, when one will have all the debt or none, the other will take it by parts as the debtor can pay. Would it become an assignee, in a case of bankruptcy, when one creditor signs the bankrupt's certificate, and another refuses, to tax the first with destroying the nature of honesty, or the last with being void of humanity? both may aim at their country's good. It is not for this obscure though disinterested pen to determine whose is the greatest merit, yet if it be not presumptuous, it will venture to scribble, that such as consider bad but *old* maxims of government, as they consider bad habits of body, and apply in both cases a similar, that is, a slow relief, seem to have had the most comprehensive view of the matter. The body politic like the natural body is subject to diseases, whose disagreeable circumstances will call for a prescription; not the violent recipe of a quack, nor even of some great physician, by him cautiously prescribed to one, by others indiscriminately vended to all; not though it be sanctified by patent, and graced with the names of a thousand recovered invalids; but, on the contrary, that relief which the cool and cautious penetration of the prudent practitioner directs.—Happy for the good people of England that medicines are mostly distasteful, or else in defiance of reason they would have been poisoned by patent before now! Happy also for their morals that violent tempers provoke, that gentle measures conciliate, otherwise they might have exchanged, but they would not have repented their crimes!

A large and comprehensive view of men and things best interprets the wise man's saying, *there is a time for every purpose, and for every work!* Separations in ethicks, perhaps, like dissections in anatomy, may produce queer effects, particularly in the various *means* used by good men to please God and to profit mankind, as in this matter of petitioning; but all that labour in the good cause of truth, viewed in their whole, each throwing some light on the subject, and all together producing at last a solid system of religious liberty, will discover a lovely symmetry. Such a view an excellent German historian had, when he praised Luther for making homely rhymes for the country people; Erasmus for the facetiousness of his colloquies; Sainte Aldegonde for the comical tales in his romish hive; and old Beza for composing a song for the people of Geneva: these men had studied human nature; they thought *that a bait which caught a fish*, or in better stile, that *he who winneth souls is wise;* and by these they conducted their brethren to the serious and sober folios of Calvin and others; all conspiring to dethrone the barbarity and tyranny of the bishop of Rome. Should any pretend to quibble at the little escapes of such men, the bulk of the world would know no more of it than of the anatomists *interscapularia*, and the rest would consider it as a north-country *Lilly-Low*, that is, a mere straw-fire. Heaven prosper all that love religious liberty! May they *live in peace!* May *the God of love and peace be with them!*

LETTER I.

ON

CANDOUR IN CONTROVERSY.

Lis nunquam; toga rara; mens quieta. MARTIAL.

LETTER I.

SIR,

BE ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, is an excellent exhortation of St. Peter's to the primitive church. Christianity is elegantly styled *the hope that is in you:* this hope, the apostle says, is *rationally* to be accounted for to every man that asketh. But what an essential in edifying controversy are men directed to! *meekness and fear!* The question and the answer, the accusation and the defence, the inquiry and the apology are mutually concerned in it. Happy for the christian world had she obeyed this admirable direction!

Suffer it to be said Sir, that if your letter abounds with fine reasonings; if those reasonings be made to serve a mistaken zeal; that generous and patient docility with which it closes is its highest praise, and throws a kind of sunshine over all. Man's whole interest is truth, and the pursuit of it his noblest effort. You blame the late petitioners; you maintain the necessity of subscription; you involve magistrates, ministers and people, in an obligation to support the present system, as if all would suffer in its demolition. Yet after

all, you desire to hear what can be said against your arguments; your mind, like a nicely poised pair of scales, being ready to preponderate either way, on which side soever evidence shall fall. Is not this to atone for all your mistakes? Is not this to possess the finest state of mind in the world? Your friend may without flattery, say that your behaviour is a comment on St. Peter's advice. Should the answer be given in the same spirit in which the inquiry is made, friendship will cement though sentiments differ.

A friend of yours, a man of infinite complaisance to the ladies, sat down one day to study the opinions of the primitive fathers on baptism; after others, he began Tertullian's book on that subject. That book, you know, is intitled *Quinctus Septimius Florens Tertullian, Presbyter of Carthage, on Baptism, against Quintilla.* Imagining that the African father was as great an admirer of the ladies as himself, he did not doubt but he should be much edified by Tertullian's addressing QUINTILLA on baptism. Wisdom, gravity and politeness, said he to himself, are united here to be sure. But how would you have smiled had you seen his panic, when he discovered in the fifth line of the first chapter that Tertullian falls to abusing her, calling her a heretic, a viper, a serpent, an asp, a most monstrous creature whose doctrine was of the most poisonous kind. Hah! cried he, is this an African *tete a tete!* Is this your spirit Tertullian! If you're a gentleman, where's your breeding? If a christian, where's your meekness? If a

philosopher, where's your good sense? Well, well, said he, (closing the huge book) perhaps Quintilla and you may be well met. E'en scold it out. I'll go seek a gentler tutor.

The question here is not whether your friend's conclusion from the premises was quite logical; whether asperity and argument may not be sometimes united; but whether passionate writers do not generally produce similar effects on their readers. People are naturally prepossessed in favour of a sufferer; they naturally become prejudiced against such a violent pleader; they can't help saying, What's the matter? If your accounts be right why so prodigiously agitated? You surely design to impose on us, and would deter us from detecting you. You are certainly conscious of having maintained a defenceless cause, and you are making effrontery supply the place of argugument; thus giving us brass instead of gold.

People are never safe with antagonists of this fierce temper; they are formidable beyond expression in some places. Hence that smart reply of Dr. De Launoi at Paris. The Dr. had made free to censure that angel of the schools Thomas Aquinas. The Dominicans were exasperated at this, and apologized for their angelical doctor. One day a friend said to De Launoi, "You have disgusted all the Dominicans, they will all draw their pens against you." Said he, with a malicious air, "*I dread their pen-knives more than I do their pens.*"

Your candid and disinterested pursuit of truth Sir, naturally contrasts itself with the absurd con-

duct of others, and their folly is a shade to your glory. The indolent prefer an easy faith to a painful search, and their reason bleeds on an altar erected to the love of ease. The impatient, like Pilate, ask, *What is truth?* But never wait for an answer. The proud, though not infallible, are always in the right! The sons of luxury or avarice, like Esau, prefer a meal to a birth-right. What a waste of goodness would it be to propose truth to these? Their minds are preoccupied, and till their vices are dispossessed, it is morally impossible to alter them. A writ of ejectment is the first part of a process with them.

A thousand apologies may be made for studious and serious men, when they miss their way in an argument. The prejudices of education, the want of information, the influence of company and example, gratitude for a past favour, hope in a future one, these, and more such topics will always afford pleas for honest mistaken men, pleas which may diminish the guilt of an error, though they cannot assign to it the merit of truth.

To which of these causes your mistakes about subscription are owing is not the question now. It is enough that you are open to conviction. Friendship cannot refuse your request; you will therefore receive a letter on each subject in dispute as a multitude of avocations will allow; and should you in the issue see cause to change sides, you would but follow the greatest men in their greatest actions. Did not Cicero, the glory of Rome, condemn in his riper years some of his juvenile pieces? Has

not Hippocrates, the prince of antient physicians, owned himself deceived in his judgment of the sutures in the skull? Is not half St. Paul's conversion a public renunciation of his former sentiments? And pray did ever any body imagine that this lessened their glory? It increases it, you'll say, as more skill and resolution are needful to correct a bad habit, than to avoid contracting one.

Indeed, the man who undertakes to correct one's mistakes does one a great honour. He remonstrates in hope of reclaiming, but before he can hope to reclaim, he must presuppose all those amiable dispositions which enable a man to say, I AM MISTAKEN. Yet why should any man be ashamed of saying so? All men make mistakes; there is but one article in which wise men and fools differ; a wise man reforms his mistakes, a fool perseveres. Mr. Bayle's sensible letter to his friend Professor Du Rondel is not foreign from the purpose. "I "take notice (says he) of some errors committed "by persons, for whom I have an extraordinary "esteem, and who honour me with their love. Such "as I shall spare will have some reason to com-"plain of me, as it will be an indication that I "imagined they are incapable of hearing reason, "or able to sustain the least loss. The former "have so ample a reputation, and such vast trea-"sures of glory, that an hundred shipwrecks could "not do them any prejudice. If there are any "whose errors ought to be passed over, it is chiefly "the poorer sort, who on such an occasion would

"be plundered to their very shirts, was any one "to fall upon their frippery."

Bayle's comparison of men of genius and learning to men of fortune is pretty, but it must be said, that they who can best afford a loss do not always suffer one with a good grace. It is not the ability but the temper that reigns here. Men of learning like men of fortune can often better afford a loss than they can bear one; and this perhaps is the reason why persons of inferior abilities often discover truths which their superiors cannot: a supreme, disinterested love to truth presides in their inquiries.

You lament, (and indeed who can help lamenting?) the bad spirit of too many religious controversies. Religion is a sacred thing, and meekness is a part of it: whence then is it, that prejudice and passion in some, fire and flame in others, appear in these disputes? The gospel is nothing of all this; the gospel needs nothing of all this; all this disgraces the gospel: for which reason, perhaps, our Saviour forbad the devils to publish his mission.

The fierce disputes of Christians have always scandalized the good cause, and will always continue to do so, till mildness and moderation succeed violence: and then christianity will reassume her primitive habit, and with that her native prevalence. Errors like prostitutes may paint themselves and pay their bullies, but let truth, especially religious truth, disdain such aid, and show the world a more excellent way.

There is in the life of Archbishop Tillotson a

fine example of the deportment here pleaded for. While Dr. Tillotson was Dean of Canterbury, he preached at Whitehall, before his Majesty Charles the Second, a Sermon in which were these words: "I cannot think, till I be better informed (which "I am always ready to be) that any pretence "of conscience warrants any man, that is not "extraordinarily commissioned, as the apostles "and first publishers of the gospel were, and "cannot justify that commission by miracles, as "they did, to affront the established religion of a "nation, although it be false, and openly draw "men off from the profession of it, in contempt "of the magistrate and the laws. All that persons "of a different religion can in such case reason-"ably pretend to, is to enjoy the private liberty "and exercise of their own consciences and re-"ligion, for which they ought to be very thank-"ful."—&c. &c. When the Dean had ended his sermon, said a certain nobleman to the King, who had been asleep most part of the time, *'Tis pity your Majesty slept, for we have had the rarest piece of Hobbism, that ever you heard in your life. Ods fish,* replied the king, *he shall print it then.* The Dean was accordingly ordered to print it. He did so, and as soon as it came from the press, sent one, (as he usually did) to his friend, the Rev. Mr. John Howe. Mr. Howe (you know) had been ejected for nonconformity, and was at that time pastor of a congregation in London. On reading the Dean's sermon he was exceedingly troubled at the above cited passage,

and drew up a long expostulatory letter on the subject. He signified "how much he was grieved, "that in a sermon against popery he should plead "the popish cause against all the reformers. He "insisted upon it, that we had incontestible evi- "dences of the miracles wrought by the apostles, "and that we are bound to believe them, and take "religion to be established by them, without any "farther expectations. What (said he) must the "christian religion be repealed, every time a wick- "ed governor thinks fit to establish a new reli- "gion? Must no one stand up for the true reli- "gion till he can work a miracle?" &c. Mr. Howe carried the letter himself, and delivered it into the Dean's own hand, who, thinking they should be less interrupted in the country, proposed Mr. Howe's dining with him at Sutton-court, the seat of the Lady Falconbridge. The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Howe read over the letter to the Dean, and enlarged on its contents, as they were travelling along together in his chariot. The Dean, at length convinced of his mistake, fell a weeping freely, and said that this was the most unhappy thing that had of a long time befallen him. I SEE (says he) WHAT I HAVE OFFERED IS NOT TO BE MAINTAINED. Let bigots censure the good Archbishop Tillotson's friendship and tenderness to dissenters; let them exclaim at his want of zeal; exclusive of the rest of his conduct, the single example above recited, will make you cry with Bishop Burnet, *his conduct needs no apology, for it is above it.* Farewell.

LETTER II.

ON

UNIFORMITY IN RELIGION.

Jura. Sed Jupiter audiet. Eheu
Baro! regustatum digito terebrare salinum
Contentus perages, si vivere cum Jove tendis. PERSIUS.

LETTER II.

SIR,

LEGISLATION is doubtless a sacred thing: it is a divine imitation of the government of mankind, and is deservedly assigned to the first in birth, property, and skill: but, the history of all nations will prove, that in parliaments, as in paradise, the serpent has found a way to corrupt and deprave. Ignorance or interest, negligence or pride, have too often prevailed over the generous principles which ought to influence these gods of mankind; and one age has been driven to repeal the laws of a former: so that perhaps legislation would furnish a large history of the extravagancies of the human mind, among which an ACT OF UNIFORMITY would appear one of the greatest. Britons boast of their laws, and in general with great reason; but some of them blush for their country when they read a law intitled an act of UNIFORMITY.

It would be foreign from the present purpose to enquire the origin of this law,

To whom related, or by whom begot,

it may be more proper to show that religious uniformity is an impossibility, and that a law of this kind can neither be argued from the light of na-

ture, nor from the holy scriptures. The idea of uniformity is neither the idea of a philosopher, nor of a christian. The fabricature of this law therefore by men who had a just right to both these titles implies a moment's absence.

Sound policy requires a legislature to preserve its dignity; but the dignity of a legislature is never more prostituted than when impracticable edicts are issued. The dignity of legislation depends more on inforcing than on inventing a law: the latter may be done by a pedant in his study, but the first must have power, property, magistracy, penalty, in a word, authority to support it; and this energy is its dignity. Where a tax is levied which the people cannot pay; where a kind of obedience is required which the people cannot yield; the legislators are forced to dispense with the obedience required. And what follows? the people despise a folly which could not foresee, a narrowness of capacity which could not comprehend, a timidity which dare not, or a weakness which cannot inforce its decrees. Did not all Europe deride the absurdity of those magistrates, who, in the reign of Mary, cited by their commissioners, Fagius and Bucer, who were both dead and buried, to appear and give an account of their faith? and, as if that was not quite ridiculous enough, caused their bones to be dug up out of their graves and burnt for NON-APPEARANCE!

Aut nunquam tentes, aut perfice, * is an excel-

* *Either never attempt any thing, or go through with it.* The motto of his grace the Duke of Dorset; and nobly exemplified in that ancient and illustrious family.

lent motto, and no where more rationally applied than in the matter of law-making. Had this been attended to, (but who that attends to the transactions of the year 1559, can wonder that it was not?) an *act of uniformity* could never have been passed. The impossibility of inforcing it might have been foreseen; nor ought it to be wondered at if five years after, "her Majesty was informed, that "some received the communion kneeling, others "standing, others sitting. Some baptized in a "font, some in a bason; some signed with the sign "of the cross, others not." In vain the queen attempted to inforce the act by penalties; in vain have succeeding princes endeavoured to inforce it; in vain were the formidable forces of oaths, subscriptions, fines, and prisons brought into the field; cruelty and lenity, madness and moderation, the gentleness of the eighteenth, and the rage of the seventeenth century have been employed in vain; the act stands disobeyed and unrepealed to this day.

Make religion what you will; let it be speculation, let it be practice; make it faith, make it fancy; let it be reason, let it be passion; let it be what you will; *uniformity* in it is not to be expected. Philosophy is a stranger to it, and christianity disowns it.

A philosopher holds that the system of the universe is perfect; that the duty and glory of man is to follow, not force nature; that moral philosophy is nothing but a harmony of the world of spirit with the world of matter; that all the fine descrip-

tions of virtue are nothing but essays on this conformity; thus he proves that moral evil is the production of natural evil, moral good the production of natural good. A philosopher would say to a legislator as the poet to a man of taste:

> To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
> To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
> To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot,
> In all, let NATURE never be forgot.

Give a philosopher a farm, and injoin him to cultivate it *en philosophe*, * he will study the soil, the situation, the seasons, and so on; and, having comprehended what his farm is capable of, he will improve it accordingly. In the same manner he directs his garden, and every plant in it, never expecting to *gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.* What would he? Yea what would the unphilosophized farmers say of an *act for the uniformity of husbandry?* An act of *uniformity*, say the honest rustics, what's that? What's that! Why you must grow nothing but wheat. How! say they, some of our lands are too light, they will produce none: we can grow rye there indeed: we have some even not worth ploughing for rye; however they will serve for a sheep-walk, or at worst for a rabbit-warren. Thus NATURE teaches men to reason, and thus they reason right.

Go a step farther. Make this philosopher a tutor, and commit to his tuition a company of youths; he will no more think of *uniforming* these young gentlemen, than of teaching his horse to fly,

* *As a philosopher.*

or his parrot to swim. Their geniusses differ, says he, and I must diversify their educations: NATURE has formed this for elocution, and that for action. And, should the blind fondness of parents complain, his answer is ready, *what was I that I could withstand God?* In short, place such a man in what disinterested sphere you will, and his principles guide his practice; except indeed he should be chosen to represent a county; then probably, not having the fear of philosophy before his eyes, he might vote for an *act of uniformity.*

A law that requires uniformity, either requires men to be of *the same sentiments*, or to practise *the same ceremonies.* Now if it should appear that the first is impossible, the last will fall of itself. For then the question will be, ought two men who confessedly differ in sentiment, to profess that they agree? Ought an honest man to *be* one thing, and *appear* another? Heaven forbid that any should maintain so dangerous a thesis!

You are a man of extensive knowledge; you know the ancient and modern creeds; you remember that Harry the eighth injoined "*all preachers* "*to instruct the people to believe the* WHOLE *bible*, "THE THREE CREEDS, *the Apostles', the Nicene*, "*and the Athanasian, and to interpret all things* "*according to them.*" You know that in Edward the sixth's reign, TWO AND FORTY ARTICLES, drawn up by Cranmer and Ridley, were thought necessary to be published, *for the avoiding diversity of opinions, and establishing consent touching true*

religion. In the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, you know, ELEVEN articles were "*set out by order* "*of both archbishops, metropolitans, and the rest* "*of the bishops, for the* UNITY *of doctrine to be* "*taught and holden of* ALL *parsons, vicars and* "*curates; as well in testification of their* COMMON "CONSENT *in the said doctrine, to the stopping of* "*the mouths of them that go about to slander the* "*ministers of the church for* DIVERSITY *of judg-* "*ment,* &c." Two years after all the former were reviewed, and THE WHOLE BIBLE, *the* THREE *creeds,* the TWO AND FORTY articles, and the ELEVEN articles, were collected into one aggregate sum, and made THIRTY NINE. Subscription to these has been essential ever since, which subscription *is an argument* (as his Majesty's declaration says) *that* ALL *clergymen* AGREE *in the* TRUE, *usual, literal meaning of the said articles.*

Whatever be the *true* meaning of these articles, it is not only certain that clergymen explain, and consequently believe them in different and even contrary senses; but it is also credible that no thirty nine articles can be invented by the wit of man, which thirty nine men can exactly agree in. It is not obstinacy, it is necessity.

Suppose the thirty nine articles to contain a given number of ideas, and, for argument's-sake, suppose that number to be fifty: suppose the capacities of men to differ, as they undoubtedly do, and one man's intelligence to be able to comprehend fifty, a second's five hundred, and a third's but five and twenty. The first may subscribe these fifty

points of doctrine, but who can confine the genius of the second? Or who can expand the capacity of the last? In minds capable of different operations, no number of points of doctrine can possibly be fixed on as a standard for all; for fix on what number soever you will, there will always be too many for the capacities of some, and for others too few. If this be the case who can establish an uniformity of sentiment? What earthly power can say "WE WILL NOT ENDURE ANY VA-"RYING OR DEPARTING IN THE LEAST DEGREE?"

Moreover, it may be asked whether all these points of doctrine be capable of an *equal* degree of evidence; and if not, whether it be possible to inforce an *uniform* degree of belief. Take for example two propositions. "*The Bishop of Rome* "*hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.*" —"*Athanasius's creed—may be proved by most* "*certain warrants of holy scripture.*"

The first of these propositions is capable of demonstration, but the last is very doubtful; and if the degree of assent ought to be exactly proportional to the degree of evidence, a magistrate, who would establish uniformity, must either give falshood the evidence of truth, or oblige men to believe a probable as fully as a certain proposition. But if neither of these can be done, what becomes of uniformity? An uniform assent to fifty propositions, some of which are probable, others certain, and others, (pace tantis talibusque viris*) false!

* *Begging pardon of so many illustrious men.*

It is the easiest thing in the world to retire, sit down, invent and publish a system on any subject. Imagination, always prolific, contributes largely; and it is not difficult to erect an ideal world with Berkeley; an ideal republic with Plato; or in short a philosophical romance of any kind. All sorts of men, poets, philosophers, orators, divines, some of each class have erred on this head; the most ingenious wandering the farthest: but when these romantic machines are applied to real life, to the tillage of a field, the government of a state, the forming of a church, they appear only elaborate trifles; amusive, but not useful. If such ingenious inventors are great men, there is another class greater still, a class whose motto is DUCE NATURA SEQUAMUR.*

After all, what is uniformity good for? Is it essential to salvation? Is it essential to real piety in this life? Does it make a subject more loyal to his prince? A husband more faithful, or a parent more tender? Cannot a man be honest and just in his dealings without knowing any thing about St. Athanasius? Nay, has not this act produced more sophistry and cruelty than any other act of parliament from the reformation to this day? Not secular, but spiritual severity; not the sophistry of the bar but the sophistry of the church.

Did the great Supreme govern his empire by an act of uniformity, men might be damned for believing too little, seraphs degraded for believing too

* *Let us follow where nature leads.*

much. The creed of the inhabitants of Saturn might be established, and theirs that dwelt in the moon only tolerated: in such a case, what a fine field of controversial glory would open to the divines of these two provinces of the kingdom *de origine mali?* * Almighty father, can a blind belief please thee? Can thy creatures believe what they cannot perceive the evidence of? Can all understand the evidence of the same number of truths? Formed with different organs, educated in different prejudices, dost thou require the same services? Art thou indeed the *hard master who reapest where thou hast not sowed?* Far from all thy subjects be such a thought!

Conclude then, worthy Sir, that if *God* be *a rock, and his work perfect*, if VARIETY be the characteristic of all his works, an attempt to establish UNIFORMITY is reversing and destroying all the creator's glory. To attempt an uniformity of colour, sound, taste, smell, would be a fine undertaking; but what, pray, will you call an attempt to establish an UNIFORMITY OF THOUGHT?

You will say, christianity is not the religion of nature, but the religion of revelation; what therefore may seem absurd to philosophy may be explained by christianity. Perhaps the founder of our holy religion may have established uniformity. If he has, uniformity may be a christian though not a philosophical idea. Well, this shall be enquired in the next letter. Mean time farewell.

* *On the origin of evil.*

LETTER III.

ON THE

RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

Nec imperiale est libertatem dicendi negare, nec sacerdotale, quod sentiat, non dicere.

ST. AMBROSE.

LETTER III.

SIR,

YOU have often admired that dedication to the Pope which is prefixed to a piece of Sir Richard Steele's, intitled, *An account of the state of the Roman catholick religion throughout the world*, &c.—"Your holiness, says the writer, is not perhaps aware, how near the churches of us protestants have at length come to those privileges and perfections, which you boast of as peculiar to your own.—The most sagacious persons have not been able to discover any other difference between us, as to the main PRINCIPLE of all doctrine, government, worship, and discipline, but this one, that you CANNOT err in any thing you determine, and we never DO. That is, in other words, that you are INFALLIBLE, and we ALWAYS IN THE RIGHT. We cannot but esteem the advantage to be exceedingly on our side, in this case, because we have *all the benefits of infallibility, without the absurdity of pretending to it*, and without the uneasy task of maintaining a point so shocking to the understanding of mankind." This is not a libel; this is a satire; the worst is, this satyrical stroke is

true. The church of Rome refuses the scriptures to the people; some protestant churches grant the sight of the book, but retain the meaning. Can you see any difference? Search or not search, read or not read, the sense is fixed, it is at the peril of your preferment to vary.

Whence church governors pretend to derive this right does not signify. It can neither be derived from the nature of christianity, the doctrine or practice of Christ or his apostles, the condition of man in a state of nature, his condition as a member of society subject to magistracy, nor indeed in England from any thing but *the act of supremacy;* an act which transferred a power over mens' consciences from the pope to the king. His Majesty Henry the VIIIth, by a master stroke in politics, preferred an indictment against the whole body of the clergy in Westminster Hall, and obtained judgment upon the statute of præmunire, whereby they were all declared to be out of the king's protection, and to have forfeited all their goods and chattels; and then pardoned them on two conditions; first that they should pay into the exchequer 118840l. Secondly that they should yield his majesty the title of *sole and supreme head of the church of England;* a title which by subsequent declarations was so explained as to annihilate the right of private judgment, and yet private judgment gave birth to this very act.

Suppose his majesty Harry the VIIIth. exercising the authority allowed by the act of supremacy; and among other things forming a creed for his

subjects; suppose him a man of shallow capacity; would not his creed have been too lean and poor for many of his subjects? And on the contrary, suppose him a man of an exalted genius, of a prodigious stretch of thought; would not his creed have been too rich and full for many more? But the impossibility of exercising such a power was discussed in the last letter; this is to canvass the legality of it.

No mean can be lawful in itself which destroys the end for which it is appointed. Now the end to be obtained is the establishment of christianity. But how can the depriving men of the right of private judgment be a lawful mean of obtaining that end, seeing christianity is a personal obedience to the laws of Christ arising from a conviction of their excellency, and their connection with certain facts of whose certainty evidence is given, which evidence to be received must be examined? Christianity proposes truths of speculation and truths of practice: if men can examine and ascertain the first by proxy, why not obey the last in the same manner? But who can love or fear, believe or hope by substitution?

If to deny the right of private judgment be destructive of the nature of christianity in general, it is more remarkably so of the christianity of the reformed churches. The right of private judgment is the very foundation of the reformation, and without establishing the former in the fullest sense, the latter can be nothing but a faction in the state, a schism in the church. The language of the refor-

mers must be something like this when they proposed subscription. "Gentlemen, the right of private judgment allowed of God, and supported by all kinds of argument, hath been challenged and exercised by men for upwards of five thousand five hundred years; we ourselves have recovered it from the pope, who had unlawfully usurped this right, and *as God, sat in the temple of God.* In virtue of this right, we have examined the holy scriptures, fixed their meaning, and engaged the king to support a creed which by delegation we have composed for his majesty, and for all his subjects. In us the right of private judgment ceases, and should England continue five thousand five hundred years longer, no man shall exercise this right without suffering all the penalties we can inflict. Indeed all Europe is but just emerging from barbarity, learning is but in its infancy, and England is torn and rent with civil dissentions. In all probability, peace may succeed war, learning may diffuse itself, and invigorate to maturity; and a hundred years hence men may arise infinitely more capable than we are: but let succeeding ages improve as they will, all men shall *leave the minster where they find it.*" How say you Sir? Cranmer stained his archiepiscopal hands with blood; but could even Cranmer have opened the convocation with such a speech as this? Yet speak it or no, it is all fact.

The reformers were not to blame for exercising the right of private judgment themselves; their fault was a denial of the same right to others. They

had the highest authority for what they did, deriving it from the doctrine and example of Christ and his apostles.

Take one, two, or more of our Saviour's doctrines, and ask, what magic can there be in subscribing them without examination? Himself never proposed such a thing, but on the contrary, exhorted his hearers to *search the scriptures;* a strange impertinence unless the right of private judgment be allowed! Nor did he only exhort the people to judge for themselves, but he also warned his disciples not to usurp that right. CALL *no man your father upon the earth, neither* BE YE CALLED *masters.* Neither impose your opinions upon others, nor suffer them to impose theirs upon you.

Had Jesus Christ considered the right of private judgment in an unlawful light, he would first have instructed Herod, or Caiaphas, or some of the principal rabbies, and by them he would have converted the nation. But instead of that, he condemns the doctrines of the church governors, addresses his sermons *ad populum,** gives it as a proof of his mission that *the gospel was preached to the poor,* and constantly protects his followers in the exercise of the right of private judgment. When the disciples plucked and ate the ears of corn, they broke two canons of the established church. It was on a sabbath-day; and probably before morning service was over; and the church had deter-

* *To the common people.*

mined the illegality of what they did. Used to judge for themselves, they thought the church mistaken in this case, ventured to think for themselves, and acted accordingly. Did not Jesus Christ protect them in their claim?

The apostles, worthy followers of such a master, went into all nations preaching a doctrine which no church governors upon earth believed. Did they deny the right of private judgment? If they had, their expeditions would have been in the Quixotic style. Did St. Paul write to Corinth? *I speak as to wise men:* JUDGE YE *what I say.* Did he write to Rome? *Let* EVERY MAN *be fully persuaded in his* OWN *mind.* Every body understood this. The populace at Berea, men and women, *searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so.* The students at Athens desired to *know what the new doctrine* was, of which the apostle spake; for the purpose of search no doubt. The magistrates, as Gallio, declared themselves NO JUDGES IN SUCH MATTERS. And hence the amazing success of his preaching: for what himself calls *preaching with demonstration of the spirit, and power,* St. Luke calls *reasoning in the synagogue every sabbath-day.* Compare Acts xviii. 4. with 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. Who can account for all this without the right of private judgment?

Consider the condition of man in a state of nature; and you will readily grant either that a right of determining for himself is no man's, or every man's right. Vindicate the right to one, and you do it to two, to two hundred, to two thousand, to

the whole world; for all in a state of nature are on a level. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, prince nor subject: the right of one argued from his nature is the right of all. Whether men forfeit this right in a state of society is another question.

A christian not only cannot, but if he could he ought not to dispose of this right, because not only he cannot be a christian without its exercise, but all the purposes of civil government may be answered without it. The power of the magistrate is an article of importance enough to demand a particular discussion, that therefore shall be the subject of a future letter; let the remaining space of this be filled up with enquiring, whether, if this advantage of private judging had been denied to other classes of men, the world would not have sustained infinite damage?

Choose of the mechanical arts, or of the sciences, which you please, place it in the state in which it was seven hundred, five hundred, or two hundred years ago; let its then present state be defined, its *ne plus ultra** determined; let all future search be prohibited, and what an innumerable multitude of useful discoveries are men deprived of?

When Columbus first imparted his designs relative to the discovery of America to Ferdinand king of Spain, his majesty thought proper to advise with his ecclesiastical counsellors about it. All were against the project, and quoted St. Austin, who, in

* *Its utmost bounds.*

his book *de civitate Dei*, had declared it impossible to pass out of one hemisphere into another; and had denied that there could be any antipodes. Seneca, Seneca the heathen, had declared long before, that future ages would discover new worlds, and that Thule would not be the farthest region upon earth. In this case it must be owned that St. Austin was an heretic, and Seneca a sound believer. The king and Columbus ventured to dissent, judged for themselves, and found ample reward for so doing, notwithstanding clerical decisions. Indeed St. Austin was not the only person who denied the possibility of Antipodes; the church denied it, that is, the head pope Zachary denied it for all the members. And this is the order that he sent to his legate Boniface Archbishop of Mentz, who had accused Virgil bishop of Saltzburg of holding the dangerous error of the Antipodes. "If says the head of the church, "he should be con-"victed of maintaining that perverse doctrine, "which he hath uttered against the Lord, and "against his own soul, that is, that there is another "world, other men under the earth, another sun "and another moon, call a consistory, degrade "him from the honour of the priesthood, *et ab ec-*"*clesia pelle.*"* A fine story for a man to be excommunicated for!

Has not all Europe pitied the fate of Copernicus and Galileo, the fathers of modern astronomy? The first kept his work near forty years before he dared to publish it, and died immediately after it

* *And excommunicate him.*

was presented to him; the persecution he dreaded being the supposed cause. As to Galileo, he was charged with heresy, first for affirming that the sun was in the centre; secondly, that the earth was not in the centre, but had a diurnal motion. His works were burnt, himself imprisoned, and being released was injoined a penance of repeating once a week for three years the seven penitential psalms. As if the penitential psalms said any thing about Galileo's crime! but these are some of the fruits of denying the right of private judgment. The pope, the sole judge, was pleased to think that these discoveries in geography and astronomy clashed with certain doctrines established in the church.

What a condition would all Christendom have been in by this time, had not this extravagant claim been denied, and the right of private judgment established in arts and sciences? All the received systems of music, astronomy, physic, and of all other arts and sciences, were originally private opinions; probably they would have been so still, had the inventors been prohibited publishing, or the public examining and receiving them. But now, mankind form into societies, impart their own discoveries, offer rewards to other inventors or improvers of arts and sciences; and what follows? What might be expected; the perfection of science. Thus Cicero accounts for that literary pre-eminence which Greece had over Rome: and thus in all nations and in all ages will the same

effects follow the same causes: in England as in Rome the maxim is true, *honos alit artes.**

Numerous are the objections made to this doctrine; there are however but two that are worth answering. The first is, that Christianity is perfect and entire in the holy scriptures, that herein it differs from human arts and sciences, that therefore the inquisitiveness necessary for the latter would be highly injurious to the former. To which it may be justly answered that many people doubt this, as the church of Rome, whose notion is too fully expressed by Cardinal Hosius, who said that the scriptures were of no more authority than Esop's fables, were it not for the authority of the church: as the people called Quakers, who consider the holy scriptures as a secondary rule subordinate to the spirit; and many others wholly deny their divinity. Now ought not all these people to be allowed the liberty of examining the proofs of the divinity and perfection of the bible? For private judgment which is their malady is also their only medicine. But let the perfection of the holy canon be granted. It will amount to no more than granting the perfection of the works of nature. In both, *invisible things, even the eternal power and Godhead* are to be *seen and* UNDERSTOOD *by the things that are made.* The word of revelation, like the works of nature, present objects to view, but objects to be examined and understood: and how can this be without the right of private judg-

* *Honours encourage arts.*

ment? You say the scriptures give a perfect account of the nature of God, the nature of man, the vanity of the life that now is, the certainty of the life that is to come; but how is another man to know this unless you allow him to examine and determine for himself? It may be a perfect rule, it may be a subordinate rule, it may be a false rule, it may be no rule at all, for any thing he knows who must not examine, or if he examines must not determine; for to retain the meaning is to retain the book; and there is no real difference between denying the examination and denying the conclusion. You know the story of father Fulgentio: preaching at Venice on Pilate's question *What is truth?* He told his hearers that at last after many searches he had found it out, and held out a New-testament, and said that there it was in his hand; but then he put it in his pocket, and coldly said; *but the book is prohibited.* Now what great difference would there have been if he had said, *You may read the book, but its true meaning is prohibited?* Yet this is what all the Arminian clergy in England must say, if they speak consistently with themselves; for in the opinion of all impartial judges the established religion is Calvinism.

The other objection is, that this will open a door to all sorts of heresies, and the truth will be oppressed and disappear. Indeed! And is truth such a timorous, cowardly thing? What idle fears are these! Should an honest man be taxed with dissoluteness and impiety, and should any propose to him a fair trial before impartial judges, would he

be frightened at it think you? Christianity is not to be loaded with calumnies, she is so already, her only hope is a fair trial.

But to abridge the matter. Do not facts contradict this? Is not the church of Rome full of heresy? Has not the gospel and the right of private judgment gone hand in hand in the reformation? Is the power and promise of God nothing? Has he not engaged to support his church? Does not every thing proposed to men relate to some operation of their minds? Does not a rational fancy protect the truth of imagery in poetry, and an honest conscience religion? Strange errors have been proposed which the penetration of church-governors could neither foresee, nor provide against; and it has happened to them as to monstrous images in poems; they are dead, and buried, and exploded, and the public taste not injured thereby. Take one example; your sagacity will apply it. Here lays now on the desk a folio poem, in xxiv Cantos, intitled *Psyche*, or love's mystery. This is a second edition, from the university press. 1702. The author is Dr. Beaumont, late Regius professor of divinity, and master of St. Peter's College in Cambridge. The preface tells you that "the *true genius* of poetry is little regarded, or "rather not subject at all to common capacities." Here follows a verse of that kind from the first canto. It is the devil in council he is speaking of.

Three times he shak'd his horns; three tines his mace
He brandish'd towards heaven; three times he spew'd
Fell sulphur upward: which when on his face

It soused back, foul blasphemy ensued
So big, so loud, that his huge mouth was split
To make full passage to his rage and it.

The devil spewing and swearing till he split his mouth! Is not this *above common capacities?* Is not this in the *true genius* of poetry? Is the genius of poetry in danger from such poetical heresy as this? Farewell.

LETTER IV.

ON

CIVIL MAGISTRACY.

Majores nostri, Patres conscripti, neque consilii, neque audaciæ unquam eguere: neque superbia obstabat, quo minus aliena instituta, si modo proba, imitarentur.

CÆSAR APUD SALLUST.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

IF mankind be considered physically, their uniformity seems an impossibility. If they be considered morally as members of a christian church, they still retain a right to judge for themselves; none of their church-governors can deprive them of that right by arguments drawn from the religion they profess. It remains now to enquire whether the civil magistrate has such a right. Has he any thing to do with the consciences of his subjects while the peace of society is safe? A short detail of the origin, the nature, and the end of civil government will probably incline you to answer no.

Let magistracy originate where it will, let it proceed from nature, from God immediately, from the people, or from power, it is immaterial: from none of these sources can there flow a right over the consciences of the subjects.

A natural magistracy is such a government as Adam had over his descendants during his natural life; and such a one any man would have, who, transported with his wife into a desolate island, should people that island with his own children and grand-children. Such a magistrate, so far

from denying his children the right in question, would naturally become both prince and priest to them, and would himself propose, as soon as he found them capable, what he had discovered of the Deity to their examination. Happy in the enjoyment of religious science himself, he would long to impart, nor would his happiness be complete till his auditors by their own powers had examined, relished, and received the truth. Should there be a fool in his little empire who could not, or an obstinate subject who would not use the right of judging for himself, it would give him the most exquisite pain; and should any protest that after their best search they could not perceive the evidence of some things asserted by their princely parent, he would naturally conclude that youth, inexperience, want of capacity, were imperfections of nature in them, but no crimes; that for his own part he was not infallible; that possibly himself might be mistaken: in short he would have no notion of a crime, and therefore would inflict no penalty. Is it credible that when Enoch prophesied in the first religious assemblies, he enforced his prophecies with penal laws? Would the father of his people act so? To parents the argument appeals.

Magistracy is sometimes obtained by power, that is, by conquest. But, whatever claims such conquerors may make, nothing can be argued for their legality; the conquest itself, on which the claim is founded, being an act of injustice. Perhaps policy, more than superstition, made the Romans when they besieged a place not only invite the tu-

telary god of the place to come out and leave the besieged, but also promised that *the same, or a more solemn worship should be paid to him by the Romans:* EUNDEM AUT AMPLIOREM APUD ROMANOS CULTUM. The policy of conquerors pleads for the right of the people, though their equity should be silent.

If magistracy be immediately derived from God, it is not supposeable that God should require a magistrate to exercise a power which himself does not exercise. How injurious to the supreme being to suppose him creating men with capacities and dispositions for judging for themselves, and instituting an order of men to suppress those qualifications? How injurious to his goodness and equity to suppose him requiring a duty of the magistrate, which he has given him no ability to perform! God thus requires impossibilities! When the Jews were under a Theocracy, and *there was no king in Israel, every man did what was right in his own eyes:* and when Moses was immediately appointed of God to govern them, not only in their morals was divorcement tolerated, but in their religion they were suffered to carry *the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of their God Remphan, figures which they made to worship.* The planet Saturn, whose persian and syriac name is said to be *Chiun,* and whose egyptian name is *Remphan,* is the supposed object of that idolatrous worship. It must be owned that Moses published very severe laws against idolatry; but whether it was that he found severity not answer the

end, or whatever was the cause, there was an omission of circumcision, and the passover, all the time of his government, (he practised the former indeed in his own family) and there are traces of extreme toleration all through the history of that people down to the death of Jesus Christ, when Sadducees are found in the high priesthood. That Moses allowed such a toleration is argued from Duet. xii. 8. If it be asked, how can his laws be reconciled with a toleration? Probably, by confining the last to private judging, and the first to overt acts disturbing the peace of society. Let it however be observed, that a not being able to reconcile seeming contradictions in this case does not affect the argument. The omission of circumcision, the allowing of divorces, and the practising of idolatry during the forty years pilgrimage of the Jews are historical facts too well attested to be denied.

After all the reasonings about the immediate derivation of magistratical authority from God, it must be granted, that it is impossible the magistrate should be *the minister of God* in any thing disagreeable to his will. Now that it is his will the magistrate should exercise authority over the consciences of his subjects, may be abundantly disproved from the light of nature, and from the holy scriptures. St. Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans about the third year of Nero's reign: is it credible that the subjection he insists on, Chap. xiii. is a subjection of conscience to NERO's creed? The primitive christians were not of the magis-

trate's religion for the space of three hundred years; yet all that time they thought the magistrate *the minister of God for good.* All that time, either the magistrate did not claim, or the church did not allow his claim of the right in question.

If the power of the magistrate be derived from the people, it is impossible he should have a just claim over their consciences: for though the people, coming out of a state of nature into a state of society, give up many private rights in order to obtain other and greater rights; yet this is a right which cannot be supposed to be given up; for two reasons. First, the right itself in its nature is inalienable. No man can any more divest himself of private judging than of thinking. Make what contracts he will, a little attention will convince him that no man ever gave up this right, nor ever can. It is con-natural, deprive him of this and you deprive him of his existence. But secondly, suppose he could resign the right of private judgment to the magistrate, he would not do it but to obtain some greater advantage in its stead. But what advantage can compensate for the loss of liberty of conscience? If any should say the peace of society is obtained by it—whose peace? Not the magistrates; for malcontents are a trouble to him; not his that loses his liberty. But the proper answer is, that where the peace of society hath been once disturbed through an abuse of toleration, it has been a thousand times disturbed by the opposite spirit of intolerance. Let magistracy originate then where it will, in nature, in conquest,

in an immediate appointment of God, or in a mutual contract among men, nothing can be deduced from its origin in favour of a claim over conscience.

This will appear yet plainer if you advert a little to the *nature* of civil government. Civil society consists in a MORAL not a SENTIMENTAL UNION, the preservation of which union is the business of the magistrate. Where a moral union prevails society is safe; where it does not no other unanimity (suppose attainable) contributes any thing. What would it contribute to the peace of society, if an uniformity of sentiment could be established in music, statuary, architecture, or painting, unless at the same time an unanimity in moral obligations prevailed also? On the contrary, how would it injure the peace of society if every one had a different creed on these articles, supposing at the same time a moral unanimity prevailed?

But does not the preservation of this moral union depend on the magistrate's authority over the conscience of the subject? Let an answer to this be deferred for a moment; and let it be asked, whether, suppose the magistrate could preserve the peace as well without exercising this authority as with it, whether in such a case, he would not choose to let conscience alone? Certainly a wise magistracy would. A wise magistrate is a politician. A politician is a master of human nature. A master of human nature knows that mankind are better governed with than without their consent. Consequently, where he has the choice of two

means to obtain the same end, he would choose that which involves the consent of the subject; and that is, to let him maintain a moral union to society on *his own* principles. But to return to the question. The preservation of a moral union does not depend on the governors' exercising a right over the consciences of the governed. On the contrary, the history of all Christendom will prove, that this very claim has destroyed more moral union than all other pretences whatever. It was a just saying of the Emperor Maximilian II. to Henry III. of France. *Such princes as tyrannize over the consciences of men, attack the Supreme Being in his strongest part; and frequently lose the earth by concerning themselves too much with heaven.*

" The direct end of the English constitution is " political liberty. Now the liberty of the subject " principally depends on the goodness of *criminal* " *laws*, and this liberty is in its highest perfection " when criminal laws derive each punishment from " the particular nature of the crime. In things " that prejudice the tranquillity or security of the " state, secret actions are subject to human juris- " diction; but in those that offend the Deity, and " where there is not any public action, [injurious " to the peace of society,] there cannot be any " point in question, as to a criminal matter: " the whole passes between God and man, who " knows the measure and time of his vengeance." These are the just sentiments of those that best understand the end of civil government, and these

sentiments plead for the right here claimed by the subject. Liberty is the end of magistracy. Whose liberty? The magistrates'? Not his only, but the subject's also.

Indeed when a magistrate claims and exercises a right over conscience, he not only deprives his subjects of liberty, but deprives the state also of the services of some of the worthiest of men. Consequently his claim is an injury to the state. Was it possible to raise from the dead the greatest men in their several professions that ever lived, were they all to be assembled in England, the state would be deprived of their fine abilities, unless (which no man can be sure of) they would subscribe the established faith.

Diversity of opinions, if judiciously managed, rather tend to discover than to destroy the truth: hence that proper advice at opening a general assembly of old, *consider* the fact, *take advice, and speak your minds:* the same notion is conveyed in the very name of the British representation; it is a parliament, that is, an assembly convened to give advice by speaking their minds. If this be a proper method of finding out truth in the state, why not in the church?

To give the magistrate a power over the consciences of the subjects is to annihilate conscience. For example: a gentleman resides in England, acknowledges the power in question, and professes with an oath, faith in the thirty-nine articles. He passes from Dover to Calais, and lo! another magistrate requires another faith; he must renounce cal-

vinism, and embrace the faith of the gallican church. He crosses the Alps and appears at Rome; another faith again. Should he pursue his route and retain his notion of magistracy, he must believe as the Czar believes at Petersburg, as the grand Seignior believes in Turkey: if he goes round the world he must be of all religions; or, to speak more properly, if he goes round the world thus, of no religion at all.

The people called quakers seem to have understood the principles of civil government as well as any people upon earth, and to have practised them more than most sects in Christendom. The first of twenty-four articles, called fundamental constitutions of Pensylvania, drawn up by the sensible Mr. Penn, deserves to be written in letters of gold, for its benevolence. "In reverence to God, the "father of lights and spirits, the author as well as "object of all divine knowledge, faith and wor-"ship, I do for me and mine declare and estab-"lish, for the first fundamental of the government "of this country, that every person, that doth or "shall reside therein, shall have and enjoy the "free possession of his or her faith, and exercise "of worship toward God, in such way and man-"ner as every such person shall in conscience be-"lieve is most acceptable to God. And so long "as every such person useth not this christian li-"berty to licentiousness, or the destruction of "others, that is to say, to speak loosely or pro-"fanely, or contemptuously of God, Christ, the "holy scriptures, or religion, or commit any mo-

" ral evil or injury against others in their conver-
" sation; he or she shall be protected in the en-
" joyment of the aforesaid christian liberty by the
" civil magistrate." Here is an example worthy the imitation of all Europe, beautiful in itself, but placed to infinite advantage when contrasted with the unnatural persecutions of many other lawgivers; the Cæsars that murdered of old, the Stuarts that butchered of late. From the the tyranny of the last the colonists fled, and of this colony you will say with Horace on another occasion,

O matre pulchra filia pulchrior!*

What avails creeping after metaphysical subtleties in the schools? Try experiments, as sound philosophers have done, and on them raise a legislative system. Suppose a modern clergyman, animated with the spirit of a Paul, should go on a mission to the savages of Canada; what methods would he use to establish the faith? Whether he went to the *Algonquins*, whose kingdom is elective, or to the *Hurons*, whose kingdom is hereditary, it would be immaterial; in both he would find a chief magistrate, who has nothing to do to cure a refractory subject, but to say to one of his guards, *Go and rid me of that dog*. Considering what influence the tyrant's rank naturally gives him, he would endeavour to conciliate himself to him first, and to obtain (if possible) his good graces. He would for the present content

* *The daughter is handsomer than her handsome mother.*

himself with secretly abhorring a savage despotism, which he could not controul, and probably would avail himself of Hobbes's maxim. He used to say, that, *if he was in a deep pit, and the devil should put down his cloven foot, he would take hold of it to be drawn out by it.* Suppose his majesty should indulge him with an audience, would he dare to say to him, Sire, I am an ambassador of the great spirit, who made, who preserves, and who, after death, will judge, and reward or punish, all mankind. The obedience which he requires, is partly dictated by mens' consciences, and fully explained in this book in my hand; a book which the great spirit commanded to be written for our instruction, and received under pain of his displeasure. Your majesty however has the same authority in this nation, as other kings have in their dominions, and it remains with you to determine whether these things be true or false. Not only have none of your subjects a right of examining and determining for himself, but I myself, consistent with my notion of your majesty's supremacy, am ready to renounce all but what your majesty believes as long as I am in your dominions?

O say you, all this is nothing to the purpose, a king has no right over conscience *quatenus** king, but as a *christian* king; without this just distinction, you will be able to prove that if a Canadian king be wrong, his subjects however are right; for

* *Considered merely as a king.*

they do what God requires, that is, they submit their faith and consciences to *the king as supreme.* Very well. See now what all your fine theory comes to. Suppose a jesuit should convert the king; has he a right to establish christianity as the papists profess it? No, say all the reformed churches. The right belongs to him *quatenus protestant* christian king. *Quatenus* episcopalian, says one; *quatenus* presbyterian says another; not at all says a third, whose voice ought to silence all:—*Render unto Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God, the things that are God's.* Farewell

LETTER V.

ON

INNOVATION.

Laudamus veteres, sed nostris utimur annis. OVID.

LETTER V.

SIR,

DONT you recollect before the petitions for relief in the matter of subscription were presented to parliament, that a gentleman in company foretold their fate, and grounded his prophecy on a very singular opinion? An opinion, which then the company made light of, but which since has appeared too well founded. The company expatiated on the equity, the reasonableness, the modesty, of the petition; they urged the good sense, the generous and candid spirit of the government in religious matters; they said there was not an intolerant member of the British senate; they passed the highest and justest encomiums on the known benevolent spirit of the royal family; they put all together and concluded that the bill would pass. I beg leave to differ from you gentlemen, said the good man in question, and to assure you that it will not pass. Not that I doubt any thing you have advanced, but it is an *innovation*, and statesmen always fear, and often justly, innovations. It is not enough added he, that the whole legislature approves, the people must also be disposed to an act of this kind, and the people you know love the *old pad*. The

fate of the petitions you know; the true motives of their rejection are perhaps only known to God: but will there be any evil in examining for five minutes this same INNOVATION? It may amuse a leisure moment, if it does not conduct a single step in life.

It is readily granted that antiquity is sacred, especially in religion; that innovations are sometimes dangerous, above all religious ones; yet the advantage arising to the petitioners from an examination of this article is not at all precarious. To urge novelty against their petition is owning, at least not denying, the equity of it, and altering the state of the question prodigiously. The question here is not whether a freedom from subscription be a just, a reasonable right; not whether it be analogous to nature and scripture; not whether a british subject may prudently ask such a right to be established by a british senate; but merely whether the right be not a *new* claim. To this the petitioners would answer, No. The practice of judging for themselves is coeval with mankind, to be traced up to the most remote antiquity. If subjects have not made the claim in form it is because governors have not denied their right. Subscription indeed, they would say, is a novelty, against which numbers have remonstrated ever since its introduction. But allowing ourselves to be innovators, they would add, does not hurt our plea, for we are able to prove that innovation is sometimes the duty and glory of legislators: and we

can show that no evil, but much good will follow the allowance of this innovation.

As to the antiquity of subscribing creeds upon oath, nobody surely will be so rash as to affirm this to have been the practice of the first three hundred years after Christ. You will allow Mons. Du. Pin to be a capable and unsuspected judge. His remarks on the three first centuries, with which he concludes the first volume of his *Bibliotheque des auteurs ecclesiastiques*, are extremely judicious. "All theology, says he, relates to doc-" trine, discipline, or morality." He gives an abridgment first of the *doctrine* of the primitive churches, and justly remarks that it was essentially the same in all. He abridges also their *morality*, and observes that their morals were as immutable as their doctrine. "But as to their *discipline*, says he, it " was different in different churches, and frequent-" ly undergoing a change.—They were extreme-" ly careful to choose ministers whose MORALS " were irreproachable. When those that were or-" dained by the apostles died, THE PEOPLE chose " their successors.—The churches of the three " principal cities in the world were considered as " the first and chief.—The bishop of the church of " Rome was looked on as the chief bishop; how-" ever, they did not think him *infallible*, and " though he was consulted and his opinion of great " weight, yet it was not altogether *blindly* follow-" ed; EVERY BISHOP BELIEVING THAT HE HAD A " RIGHT OF JUDGING IN ECCLESIASTICAL MAT-" TERS. It was in the fourth century, when chris-

" tianity was publicly professed by the Emperor, " that the bishops assembled, AIDEZ DE L'AUTO- " RITE DES PRINCES;* and framed canons to go- " vern the church, the rights of bishops, and an " infinite number of other matters." All this is strictly true; and if the writings of the fathers, and the history of the primitive churches be closely examined, it will appear that the venerable antiquity of the three first ages after Christ, pleads for the right in question.

Nobody knows when, or by whom, the creed called the *Apostles' creed* was composed; and should any plead for its authenticity, it must not be a member of the established church, for people would naturally say; if the Apostles thought proper to compose a creed, no doubt but it was a perfect one; by what authority then have you added thirty-nine articles, two more creeds, and the whole book of homilies to the creed of a subscriber? Should it even be allowed that the Apostles, or any of their immediate successors, compiled it, can any proof be brought of their requiring subscription to it on oath? *Call now if there be any* Apostle *that will answer thee, and to which of the* Saints *wilt thou turn!*

Let it be allowed that popery, that farrago of civil and sacred, spiritual and secular things, has tyrannized over the consciences of mankind: can it be denied that some of the most venerable of the English reformers refused all emoluments, and

* *Assisted by the authority of princes.*

submitted to the severest trials, rather than clog their consciences with subscriptions and oaths? Fox and Coverdale are but two of a venerable number, whose *reverend grey hairs the act of uniformity brought down with sorrow to the grave.*

But waving all the arguments which might be drawn from the primitive times, you cannot but allow, that innovators are sometimes important men, of as great importance as the conservators of a navigable river; for the mechanical, the commercial, the literary, the theological world would all stagnate, and become useless and offensive but for them.—There are enthusiasts of all kinds, but no greater surely than some immoderate admirers of antiquity. The bawdy and blasphemy of an old Greek or Roman poet shall be distilled in the brain of some ingenious brother, till an *aqua mirabilis* * be extracted, spirituous enough to make some readers merry and others mad. All his blunders shall be referred to certain tropes, figures, or fine turns in rhetoric; his impudence is an *irony*, his ignorance an *hyperbole*, and when a common reader is shocked at his extravagance, a grave antiquarian cries, what ails you? You do not understand rhetoric, the poet makes use of a noble figure called a *catachresis*.—When one of these literary enthusiasts presides in a university, he casts the die, stamps the currency, vitiates the taste of the learned populace, whose superiors think for them, and an innovator is necessary to

* *A wonderful water.*

reform and bring back poetry to nature. Let rhetoricians say what they will, every work of art is so far perfect as it approaches nature; nature is the standard, nature is the critic, nature is the comment after all. To call to the order of nature is innovation.

Indeed innovations, however needful, have been sometimes attended with all but insurmountable difficulties: yet, these difficulties surmounted, the triumphant heroes are aggrandized for ever: such is the sense mankind have of innovation! Time was when an Archbishop of Canterbury might say to one of his flock, "*God hath called me for "to destroie thee, and all the false sect that thou "art of; by Jesu I shall set upon thy shinnes a "paire of pearles, that thou shalt be glad to change "thy voice;* with many *moe wonderous and con- "uicious wordes.*" But even then the spirit of innovating was growing, and in 1360 complained— "*Lord thy law is turned upsedown. Lord what "dome is it to curse a lewd man, if he smite a "priest, and not curse a priest that smiteth a "lewde man, and leeseth his charitie? Christ or- "dained that one brother should not desire wracke "of another; not that he would that sinne should "ben unpunished, for thereto hath he ordained "kings and dukes, and other lewd officers under "them. Lord gif any man smite thy vicar, other "any of his clerkes, he ne taketh it not in pacience, "but anon he smiteth with his sword of cursing, "and afterward with his bodilich sword he doth "them to death. O Lord me thinketh that this*

" is a fighting against kind, and much against " thy teaching. O Lord whether axsedest thou " after swerdes in time of thy passion to againe " stond thine enenies? Nay forsooth thou Lord. " For Peter that smote for great loue of thee, had " no great thanke (of thee, for his smiting.—O " sweet Lord, how may he for shame clepen him- " self thy vicar and head of the church!" Thus innovation lisped in its childhood, but at its majority, how gloriously did it speak out in the reformation!

What a miserable, deplorable state was learning in before the reformation! Latin was murdered, Greek was miscalled, and almost every word in the lexicon nicknamed. When Smith and Cheke, perceiving the absurdity of sounding all the greek vowels and dipthongs like the *iota*, endeavoured to reform that abuse, and to restore the greek tongue to its primitive pronunciation; in vain did bishop Gardiner, the chancellor, make a solemn decree against the innovation; the Cantabrigians had caught a smattering of the right sound, and, to their honour, persisted obstinately in the novel but true method of pronouncing Greek. There is a time when the *recti pervicax* is every man's praise.*

So necessary was innovation then, that the lowest of the people saw it, and while they pitied their

* *Obstinately right.* It is a part of the character which Tacitus gives Helvidius Priscus: the whole is extremely beautiful. Hist. iv. 5.

ancestors, who had been imposed on, were determined to *burst their* own *bonds and go upright.* In vain did the monks exclaim against *the newe learninge,* (as they called the gospel,) the poor people were exasperated at their old task masters, and in open court called the priests *Chuffeheads.* They soon found that free examination was the highway to truth, and they sat about investigating all they believed. *How can these things be* had been heresy for ages; but their innovations made it orthodoxy, and they inquired into every thing; *for,* as the grave father of english history well reasoned at that time, *who would haue judged, but that the mayd of Kent had been an holy woman and a prophetesse inspired, had not Cromwell and Cranmer tried her at Paules crosse to be a strong whore!*

If innovations in the state and in the schools were necessary, they were more so still in the church, for the ignorance of the clergy was insufferable.—A priest, who served a cure in the city of London, and had the charge of instructing *more than three thousand of God's sheep,* wrote *to the beloved in the Lord Jesus Mr. Persie,* his archbishop's (Parker's) chaplain, to know of his *mastership,* whether the word *junction* did not mean *utilitie.* This letter was *scriptus te viginti quinque die mencis Junius. Anno* 1563. Alas brother! you might have spared saying by way of apology that you was *pauperes spiritus:** all the parish knew it, and wished for an innovation.

* *The poor of the spirit.* He meant *poor in spirit,* and thought that phrase signified a mean capacity.

By a *survey* of the established church in 1585, and 1586, it appeared, that *after* 28 *years establishment of the church of England, there were but* 2000 *preachers to serve* 10,000 *churches; so that there were about* 8000 *parishes without preaching ministers.* Many of those incumbents were ignorant and scandalous men, while *hundreds* of good scholars and pious livers *were shut out of the church* for nonconformity, *and starving with their families for want of employment.* This SURVEY is a curious piece, and an example from it will be an argument for innovation.

COUNTY OF CORNWALL.

Benefice.	Yearly value.	Number of souls.	Name of the incumbent, and whether a preacher.	His conversation.	Who ordained him.	Patron.
V. Lanleverie.	30l.	200	Mr. Batten, no preacher.	He liveth as a pot companion.	Bp Alley	W. Kendall.
V. Tretwordreth.	Marks 100	300	Mr. Kendal, no preacher.	A simple man.	Bp Bradbridge.	L. Chancellor.
V. Esey.	30l.	60	J. Bernard, no preacher.	A common dicer, burnt in the hand for felony, & full of all iniquity.	Bp Bradbridge.	Canons of Exon.

If it were imaginable, that you could divert these remarks from their designed channel; which is to prove the necessity of reforming abuses at all times, and in all places, where they are found, without being frightened at the din of novelty! novelty! If it were imaginable that you could forget

this, and reproach the modern church of England with the weakness of her ancestors, you should be told that one *prophet of your own* printed *sweet sips of soul-savingness;* another published *a high-heeled shoe for a dwarf in Christ;* and a third, *an effectual shove for a heavy arsed christian.*

It is not a senseless interrogation of St. Austin's; *if the wisdom of this world be foolishness with God, what will you call its ignorance and folly?* (Serm. 240. vol. v. Jesuit's Edit.) What indeed! Every body will own the need of inovations then, if no interest be at stake. No member of the church of Rome but would blush now to preach what the infallible Innocent the third was not ashamed to publish. *A male child,* says that pontiff, *as soon as it is born cries A: a female E. that is* by transposition, *Eva, thus acknowledging their descent from Eve, and their title to sin and misery.* What friar would say now-a-days that children are born with a creed in their mouths, which they express in latin and hebrew? How would the present honourable house of commons stare if their preachers bade them *cry to Heaven for a midwife lest their designs should miscary?* Yet this has been done. Who that preaches before a modern university, would imitate the pious Latimer, whose eloquence once edified *that godlye impe king Edward the vi?* The good bishop, preaching once at Cambridge in christmas time, divided his discourse by a pack of cards; the gentry were *diamonds*, the poor people *spades*, *hearts* were *triumphs*, and won the game out of the hands of the pope, *the*

king of clubs. Has not your country done well to innovate sir?

Innovate! England, to her praise be it spoken, has done nothing but innovate ever since the reign of Henry the seventh, till whose time, they say, the king had not a currant bush in his dominions. She has imported the inventions and productions of the whole earth, and has improved and enriched herself by so doing. New arts, new manufactories, new laws, new diversions, *all things are become new*, and does she boggle at an innovation! The truth is, human knowledge is progressive, and there has been a gradual improvement in every thing; this age knows many things the last was ignorant of, the next will know many unknown to this, and hence the necessity of frequent innovations.

The love of novelty is so far from being dangerous, that it is one of the noblest endowments of nature. It is the soul of science, and the life of a thousand arts; it fixes one to his books, another to his instruments, a third to his experiments; it sets one to calculate at home, another to navigate abroad; it is seen every where; the caps of the ladies and the cabinets of the curious, are alike the productions of this disposition. If it be said, this passion defeats itself, and, having explored the whole creation, is as restless as ever; true, it is so, and this proves its sublime original; it will at last terminate on God, and God is an object every way fit to satiate this desire; the incomprehensi-

ble grandeurs of his nature for ever and ever affording new delights to the contemplative mind. Perhaps the sacred historian might not so much blame the Athenians for *telling and hearing some new thing*, as for *spending their time in nothing else.*

But what has all this to do with petitioning? A great deal. You say the petitioners are innovators. They deny this, and say they are antiquarians, only not superstitious enough to prefer the rust to the medal. But without availing themselves of this, they prove that the love of novelty is natural, that it puts men on inventing some things, and improving others; that new discoveries by the people call for new limitations, protections, laws from the state: that the yearly assembling of the states is an allowance of the necessity of abrogating some laws, reforming others, and making new ones. That therefore innovation is neither foreign from the nature of things in general, nor from the British constitution in particular; and they might add that almost all the great men that have appeared in the world have owed their reputation to their skill in innovating. Their names, their busts, their books, their elogiums, diffused through all countries, are a just reward of their innovations. When idolatry had overspread the world, Moses was the minister of a grand and noble innovation. When time had corrupted the institutions of Moses, Hezekiah innovated again, destroying what even Moses had set up; and when the reformations of others were inadequate, Jesus

Christ, ascending his throne, *created all things new:* twelve innovators went one way, seventy another, *their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world,* reforming, and renovating the whole face of the earth. When wealth had produced power, power subjection, subjection indolence, indolence ignorance, and the pure religion of Jesus was debased, here rises an Alfred, there a Charles; Turin produces a Claude, Lyons a Waldo, England a Wickliff; the courage of Luther, the zeal of Calvin, the eloquence of Beza, the patience of Cranmer, all conspire to innovate again. Illustrious innovators! You pleaded for conscience against custom; your names will be transmitted to all posterity with deserved renown.

Still it will be said, legislators ought not to innovate without cause, nay they ought not to risk an innovation without a moral certainty of great advantages. Be it so. And suppose a senator should ask the repeal of any law, and should urge that all statute law was expository only of the law of nature; that when the former did not square with the latter, it ought to be new cast, and should prove that the law, whose repeal he solicited, was of that kind; would any body say to that senator, Sir, your reasoning is just, but we must not innovate without cause?

As to the advantages arising from an universal toleration, it is highly probable they would be very great. Lenity in governors naturally produces the surest and noblest effects in the governed. Solo-

mon's counsellors, who were able politicians, remarked this to Rehoboam: *Serve* the people, said they, *answer them, and speak good words to them, then will they be thy servants for ever.* It would remove a mark of infamy from many of his majesty's loyal subjects, whose ambition is only to pass for what they really are, the *hearty*, not the *hired* friends of the constitution. It would destroy the endless strifes about words to no profit, which have too long armed brother against brother. It would disarm popery of its most formidable weapon against protestantism, that is, the endless divisions of protestant communities. Schisms in churches, like factions in states, are more about words than things, and if to extinguish whig and and tory be a *chef d'ouvre** in the state, why is not the extinction of party names a good work in the church? It will be replied, all this would alter nothing, wise men do not judge now of names but things; and they would continue to do so then. Very true. Statute law does not rule wise men; wise men know a law superior to it, and live by that law. But do the bulk of mankind know any thing more than names? Do they penetrate beyond appearances? Are they not ready with Hospinian's landlord to believe, if a friar tells them, that Adam was a monk and that Eve was a nun?

People of this class are the proper people (if any are) to subscribe upon oath, for to the number they swear every day one more can be no very

* *A master stroke*

considerable addition; nor would they puzzle themselves with enquiring why they were fined for swearing at home, and rewarded for it abroad. Had they learning, did they study the nature and obligations of man, did they deal in matters of conscience, did they use all their learning and influence to diffuse loyalty to the crown, benevolence to men, and piety towards God; did they offer to give every possible security to the civil magistrate, except subscribing another man's creed upon oath, which, in their opinion was no security at all; was this the case with the lower orders of men, they ought to be indulged in this article: and since the contrary is evident, they ought not to be dupes to names, and parties, about which they know nothing but the names. There is scarcely one in a thousand that frees himself from the prejudices excited by party tales. One instance indeed occurs in the life of Junius, the famous professor of divinity at Leyden. A great number of people were met to hear a dispute between Junius and a Franciscan. The people had been made to believe many idle stories about the heretical Junius. An old man bustling in the croud expressed a prodigious desire of seeing this heretic, which, when Junius was informed of, he desired might be granted. The croud made way, the old man marched forward, and diligently surveying him from head to foot, cried, now I know the falshood of what I have been told. What have you been told, said Junius. *I was told,* replied he, *that you had cloven feet!*

For the sake of these men the innovation (if it must be so called) in question is pleaded for. A fine plea truly ! Let them wallow in their brutal prejudices, why should you destroy the felicity of their ignorance ?

Softly good Sir : do you hear St. James ? *Ye have dsspised the poor.* And what then ? Why you are very irrational in so doing. All your property is in their hands; they manufacture all you use; they cultivate your lands, manage your cattle, transact almost all your affairs, export your surplus, import your superfluities: the wealth of a peerage is intrusted with them. The dearest part of your comforts are committed to them; they nurse your children in their tenderest and most ductile days, and too often instil into noble blood what time can never exhale. Yea more, your own safety depends on them; they build and man your fleets, they form your armies, they guard you by day, they stand centinel for you at night. You may *despise the poor.* You may even undertake to prove that universal benevolence, the spirit and the splendour of christianity, ought to be denied them. You may maintain that their stupid credulity ought to be imposed on by names, and their savage zeal kept in its old channel. But prudent people will think otherwise, and wish for an innovation. True, they are the dirty feet of the body politic; but their union to the head makes them respectable. For your part, you shall submit to the punishment of hearing an old tale, and a further penalty shall be inflicted on you if you will

not apply it. A skilful organist had both his hand and his foot bruised by the fall of a gallery. Whenever the surgeon attended, the musician plied him with, doctor never mind my foot; direct all your skill to the cure of my hand. The son of Galen, wearied out with this impertinence in his repeated visits, at length lost all christian forbearance, flew in his patient's face and bawled out,—*You blockhead! If your foot should mortify what would become of your hand!* Farewell.

LETTER VI.

ON

ORTHODOXY.

Profecto eos ipsos, qui se aliquid certi habere arbitrantur, addubitare coget doctissimorum hominum de maxima re (i. e. de natura deorum) *tanta dissentio.* CICERO.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

ONE of the most odious reflections that was ever cast on the gospel is that of father Thomassin. He says, that *the whole earth would have been overrun with heresy, had not the emperors maintained the faith.* Can there be a more cruel aspersion on the truth than this? And pray reverend father, what alliance is there between the faith and the sword? But stop; his reverence is right. By *faith* he means the romish religion, and by *heresy* he means whatever is not in the pope's creed; and he is right in affirming, that popery would have been annihilated had it not been in league with the state, and upheld by the sword. But should any man affirm this of the true belief of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he would asperse the gospel in the most shameful and indefensible manner. Affirm this, venerable father, of a particular modification of christianity and welcome; nobody will contradict you; but affirm this of christianity, of truth itself, of the doctrine and morality of the blessed Immanuel, and thousands will oppose you. Thousands would say; Sir, we reject error, not because you call it heresy, but because we perceive its absurdity. We believe the truth, not because his im-

perial majesty perceives its evidence, but because we have examined it ourselves, and cannot help admitting conclusions, having allowed the arguments from which they flow. No, Sir; our religion is founded not on the fear of the emperor, but on the love of God; and was there neither an emperor, nor a penal law, nor a sword upon earth, we should be obliged, if we reasoned justly, to worship God in spirit and in truth. Take back then your ungenerous reflection, beseech your imperial coadjutor to put up his sword in its sheath, and only, (as his office requires) to stand by and keep the peace, while you learn that orthodoxy has nothing in the world to fear, for she is indestructible; she may be attacked, she can never be destroyed.

Orthodoxy, (like almost all the martial terms of controvertists) is a very vague, equivocal word. —In its original and true import, it signifies a *right belief:* but, such is the fate of language, in one latitude it means a belief of one thing, in another the belief of another thing, quite contrary. In this lettter, let it stand for what St. Paul calls *the belief of the truth*, not the belief of the truth as it is in this creed, or in that, or in any other, but *as it is in Jesus;* and, without enquiring who is in possession of this truth (which is foreign from the purpose) let it only be examined, whether the truth, or faith in it, be exposed to danger by an universal toleration?

Evidence is the characteristic of truth; and, if father Thomassin means any thing by his assertion,

he means, that penal laws have the power of conferring the characteristic of truth upon falshood. —But what power can give falshood the evidence of truth? If evidence be the support of a true proposition, the truth stands independent of the magistrate's power, and, supported by evidence, there is nothing left for the magistrate to do. If he means that the bulk of mankind, from the base principles of avarice or fear, will profess to be of the magistrate's sentiments, and without examining, will maintain his creed, all this is granted; but that such slaves to interest are orthodox believers, or believers at all, is denied. If it be said that the profession of the truth by such respectable personages, will always influence people to examine what they believe, it is readily granted; but this very examination proves that neither pomp nor penalties characterise truth: it is evidence. Is it credible that such numbers of people in all Europe would have suffered martyrdom for their own sentiments, if punishments could have made that true which was false before, or could have prevailed on the martyrs to believe what they could not perceive the evidence of?

Propositions in books are pictures of objects in nature, and their *truth* lays in the exact conformity of the picture to its original: but what, in the name of logic, has the *truth* of this conformity, or the *perception* of this truth to do with imperial penalties? Suppose a skilful artist should present to public judgment an exact representation of the emperor on canvass. It is a fine

painting says one; it is a striking resemblance says a second; I am surprized at your infatuation, says a third, it is not at all like his majesty. A dispute originates, the emperor interests himself in it. Did his majesty condescend to allow the disputants the honour of comparing the picture with the original, probably the difference might be adjusted: yet perhaps not, for, after all, their different judgments might originate in a difference of their organs; or in a hundred things more. But, originate where it would, should his majesty say, "Gentlemen, this picture is a *true* representation of my person; and this proposition is a *true* representation of the picture: and if you do not believe both these, I shall refuse you my protection, I shall expose you to a fine, to an imprisonment, to death itself:"—Does any body imagine that the emperor would maintain orthodoxy? Silence might be imposed, but belief would not be produced.

To the belief of a truth three things are essential; an object, a proposition representative of that object, and an operation of an intelligent being assenting to that representation; which assent can be obtained no other way than by the mind's perceiving the agreement of the proposition with its object. Belief or assent is an after operation of the mind, fixed by the God of nature as immutably as the parts of the body are, and as nature never produced eyes in the hands, nor ears in the heels, so neither did that man ever exist, who could disconcert the order of the operations of his

mind. It is not in his power to believe, it is not in the power of any body else to make him believe truth without evidence. Take the *first* of these essentials; an *object:* God, Moses, Christ, Paul, heaven, hell, death, judgment. All these objects are what they are, independent of emperors, establishments, penalties, oaths, or any thing else of the kind. Take the *second*, a proposition exactly representing the object. That proposition is the *truth.* Now what have emperors, or establishments, or oaths, or penalties to do with the truth of the proposition? Every proposition is either true or false independent of imperial conduct. Moses was a faithful historian, is either true or false, government can vary nothing. Should government enact, Moses was a faithful historian; or on the contrary, Moses was an impostor, it would not at all affect the truth of the proposition. If he was a faithful historian, no act of government can make him an impostor; if he was an impostor, no government can establish his fidelity. So that the object, and the truth of the object, described in a proposition, are as independent on magistracy as the being and motions of the planets. Every proposition in scripture was the same when Juvenal ridiculed it, as when Milton revered it: the same when Nero persecuted as when Elizabeth established it: and had poets and princes never existed, what the bible says of Moses would have been either true or false. Poetry and

principality, a canon and a ballad are of equal efficacy here, that is, they effect nothing at all.

If neither an object of thought, nor a proposition descriptive of that object, at all depend on the will of the emperor, the only question that remains is, whether the *assent* of the mind to the truth of the description depends on his establishing the proposition by law? His majesty requires all his subjects to believe a proposition under pain of his displeasure; but no imperial edict can alter that order of the operations of the mind, which *the king of kings, and lord of lords* hath established in nature. The subject cannot believe or assent to a truth without evidence; he cannot receive that evidence without examination. In order to perceive the conformity of a proposition with the object it describes, his mind must compare the two together; and if, through a defect in his intellects, he should think the proposition affirms too much of the object, or if, through an abundance of intelligence, he should think the proposition affirms too little, in both cases he would deny the *truth* of the proposition, or the exactness of the description. What must he do in such a case? Can he assent to what he cannot perceive the evidence of? It is impossible. Shall he incur his majesty's displeasure by declaring he cannot receive the proposition for a true one? Shall he, to retain his majesty's favour, make oath against his conscience that he does believe the truth of the proposition? O cruel dilemma! That offends my prince; this affronts my God!

Heu quantum fati parva tabella vehit!*

All this would follow the establishment of *truth* by law, but a great deal worse would follow the establishment of error. For imperial edicts not only cannot produce faith, but they, by prohibiting the means, destroy the end, and generate infidelity. An error established by law, and protected by the sword, gains authority, antiquity, universality, and many more marks, which pass with numbers of honest, but interested, or superficial reasoners, for the characteristics of truth. In all probability therefore, father Thomassin's tables must be turned; and instead of saying, *the whole earth would have been overrun with heresy, had not the emperors maintained the faith,* it might rather be said, *the whole earth would have been overspread with orthodoxy, had not their majesties affected to establish the faith.*

The orthodoxy of the world depends on examination; but establishments destroy examination the mean, and thereby orthodoxy the end. The hope of reward and the fear of punishment influence the bulk of mankind, and when a man risks all by reasoning justly, when the conclusion of his arguments is a fine, an imprisonment, or death, how strong is the temptation not to reason at all or to reason superficially! Should a test of this man's orthodoxy be required as soon as he arrives at manhood, when his abilities are green, his pros-

* *Alas! What great events on little trifles hang!*

pects confined, his passions vigorous, his reason immature, his examples numerous, ten thousand to one but he gives the test; and then the die is cast. He must know little of human nature who does not perceive that all future studies will rather be apologies than examinations; the man will not study to describe but to defend his post. What young gentleman of birth and learning, who that piques himself on *politesse*, and *scavoir vivre*,* having declared upon oath his faith in thirty or forty points, but with Pamphilus would say?

Adeon' me ignavum putas?
Adeon? porro ingratum, aut inhumanum, aut ferum?
Ut neque me consuetudo, neque amor, neque pudor?
Commoveat, neque commoneat, ut SERVEM FIDEM?
Accepi. Acceptam servabo. †

An emperor embracing the faith is a glorious sight. An emperor, determining his own creed, choosing his chaplains, following his conscience, and honouring the deity as he thinks most agreeable to the word of God, deserves the highest encomiums, merits immortal praise: but should his majesty deny the same privilege to the meanest of his subjects; should he affect to derive a splendor to his piety from injoining an impossibility on his subjects; should an Eusebius flatter, Sozomen disguise; should all his cotemporaries subscribe to his creed, and make oath that he was right, impartial

* *Politeness and good breeding.*

† Do you think me such a stupid, ungrateful, ill bred brute, that neither custom, nor love, nor shame, can induce me to *fulfil my promise?* I have given my word, and I'll stand to it.

posterity would think he was wrong. Impartial posterity would say, as was said of a Roman emperor, *had he never reigned, every body would have thought him worthy of reigning!*

If these reflections have any weight in the case of vague general orthodoxy, that is, in the belief of any truth, they have infinitely more in the belief of gospel truth: the truths delivered to men in the bible are above all others subject to such a train of reasoning.

One, who well understood, declared that in *St. Paul's epistles* there were SOME *things hard to be understood*, which however he thought no blemish to his writings, but, on the contrary a proof of his exalted wisdom: they are *written*, says he, *according to the* WISDOM *given unto him.* Agreeable to this, St. Paul considered himself as *a debtor both to the wise greeks, and to the unwise barbarians.* He was intrusted with the dispensation of a gospel, whose truths were some of them so plain that an unlettered barbarian might understand them, and which also revealed other truths sublime enough to fill the capacities of the wisest of mankind. Glorious analogy of scripture and nature; Both present objects evident to all, but fully comprehensible by none.

Allow this notion of revelation, and scripture-truths must be classed in different degress of evidence, and importance. Some truths are so plain that they need but be read to be understood, and as soon as understood are believed. Others are so sublime, that through their grandeur, or their

distance, they are indeterminable to the greatest natural and acquired abilities; yea an inspired apostle himself cried, *O the depth!*

Now which of these truths would you establish the *orthodoxy*, or right belief of? The first? The plain, simple, easy truths of religion? What! Would you call a council of three or four hundred bishops, would you also place an emperor with all his attendants in canonical form? For what? To make all men swear that water is liquid, that gold is malleable, that a collier is black, and a drunkard mad! Will you take the second class, the indeterminable sublimities of the faith? Truly friend, if the first be needless, the last is dangerous. The church is the land of conscience, and conscience will complain, as a judge would, if you made him pass sentence on what he knew nothing, or next to nothing, about. Go lay hold of yon sly tatter-tailed astronomer, who neither attends the levees of the great, nor places of public show and diversion; who seldom reads the gazette, nor scarcely knows the right end of a pack of cards; go take from him that mischievous instrument the telescope; or still better, let him look, but swear him to his discoveries: let him make oath that the inhabitants of Saturn are eighteen feet, two inches, and three quarters high. That the ladies are pregnant with one child for thirty years, four months, six days, two hours and nine minutes. Alas! The good man had some such conjectures in his head, and began to calculate, and thought the Creator's glory expanding to his view; but, as none of his

speculations were practicable in this world, the honest man would have disturbed nobody: it is pity any body should disturb him. Most excellent Constantine! When your imperial majesty summoned 318 bishops to the council of Nice, when you condescended to grace that council with your august presence, it was from the noblest principle in the world, a desire of establishing peace in the church: but was not your majesty imposed upon by the absurdity of of your bishops, when you excommunicated and persecuted all that would not sign a creed, some articles of which were as plain as that water is liquid, and others as indeterminable as any thing that passes in the planetary worlds?

If the plainness of some truths renders subscription unnecessary, if the sublimity of others renders it dangerous, is there not another class to be established by law for peace sake? To be sure there are endless classes of truths and truths, and errors and errors, and you may establish according to your fancy. You may, with the Nicene council, after the creed is safe, proceed to discipline, and enact, that whereas it is the custom of some churches to pray kneeling on Sundays, hereafter it shall be lawful to pray standing only on that day: and whereas, some of the good old women who served as deaconesses had usually been reckoned clergywomen, hereafter they should be esteemed as of the laity. You may decree, with one council, to depose every clergyman convicted of acting contrary to the interest of the church: or, with

another, that the laity should express their respect for the clergy whenever they met them, by bowing if they met them afoot, by alighting if they met them on horseback: or with a third, that no deacon should be so rude as to sit down in the presence of a priest. All this you may, what may you not injoin? but whether these are *the things that make for peace*, the next letter shall enquire. Till then farewell.

LETTER VII.

ON

PERSECUTION.

Si magnus vir cecidit, magnus jacuit: non magis illum putes contemni, quam cum ædium sacrarum ruinæ calcantur; quas religiosi æque ac stantes adorant.

SENECA.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

PIETY and plunder, religion and murder, the service of God and the slaughter of his image, are so diametrically opposite, that had you been an inhabitant of the moon, and only heard of an attempt to unite such opposites, you would have been more than a sceptic, a very infidel: but you are an inhabitant of another orb, and you will believe, without being threatened with a penalty, that such an attempt has been made, applauded, rewarded, and, O shame to humanity! the author of a crusade canonized for a saint! As if the highest seats in paradise were purchasable only with human blood.

Astonishment increases on looking into that religion whence such sanguinary proceedings pretend to flow. Its origin is the *love* of God; its end is *peace and good will amongst men;* its laws, its gifts, its motives, its all is love; its author *the prince of peace*, and all its spirit, like its author, PEACE, PEACE, *to him that is nigh, and to him that is far off:* and yet this very religion has been so explained as to patronize the bloodiest cruelties

that the world ever saw. Well might St. John, when he saw such a tyranny arise under the christian name, cry, *I wondered with great admiration!*

Whatever idolatry and superstition may have produced, they seem to have been out-sinned here; even idolaters seem to have had less intolerance than some christian states. In Egypt a Joseph; in Persia a Nehemiah, a Mordecai; in Babylon a Daniel hold the chief offices at court, without a test, it is credible; but false christianity forbids men *to buy or sell*, unless they have *the mark* of a slave *in the forehead or in the hand.*

Let not these evils be charged too hastily on any one set of christians; all have stained, though some have dyed their hands with blood. Nor least of all let christianity itself be blamed, any more than the religion of nature for the mal-practices of pagans: corruption has mixed with and debased both, and you will admit *corruptio optimi pessima.**

When Constantine came to the imperial crown, he found the christian world at war with each other; himself professed christianity, and though it be very doubtful whether he was a christian at all, to his praise it must be said, he was ashamed of their quarrels, and proposed to establish universal peace. At first his majesty granted liberty of conscience, and had he stopped there, the remedy would have operated slowly but surely: but whether it was politically, to answer any state ends;

* The corruption of the best things is the worse kind of corruption.

or whether ignorantly, hoping to produce peace; or whether complaisantly, to please his court chaplains; or whatever was the cause, in the second year of his reign he called a council of about three hundred bishops to draw up a creed, to constitute canons for discipline, to require subscription, to punish with excommunication; in a word, to establish uniformity in religion by law. This unhappy procedure inflamed the established party with zeal, the excommunicated with revenge; it agitated the passions of mankind, and perpetuated war to this day.

Had his majesty studied nature to have known the fitness of such a law; or scripture to have found an authority from Christ; or his own honour, how he should inforce it; had he examined the matters in dispute, in which the best of his subjects might innocently err; had he meditated and mastered the subject in any point of view, he might have easily foreseen the consequences: but alas! his majesty did not understand his own religion; and while he meant, innocently perhaps, to serve it, fabricated an instrument to stab it under its fifth rib.

Calling of councils, framing of canons to catch and to kill, shedding of blood under the name and sanction of religion, were the common tricks of succeeding emperors; a complaint is brought against one that he spat on the altar; a process is carried on against the ashes of another, (Origen) for holding that glorified bodies were round; yea, if a man died in the faith, and it appeared in his will that he had left any thing to an

heretic, he should be excommunicated. Take care you that are in the church upon earth, for your governors can excommunicate even the blessed in heaven. They were excellent precautions to banish or murder the ejected heretic, to burn his books, and to cut off the hands of such copyists as dared to transcribe his works: if they had not used these precautions they might possibly have been answered, but arguments of this kind are unanswerable. This made old Latimer quaintly complain, *if we say* VÆ VOBIS, *we are called* CORAM NOBIS.*

It would be very easy to shew that violence in religious disputes naturally generates persecution; nor would it be a difficult, though a very unpleasing work to prove, that plots, assassinations, massacres, cruelties of every name, have constantly been produced by denying a liberty of conscience; and more, that such dismal scenes will always follow the same practice, in the same proportion as liberty of conscience is refused. No pretence of prophesying is assumed, but let the cause be tried at the tribunals of reason, history, scripture, and experience.

Whether all men have understanding and conscience or no is not necessary now to enquire; it is certain all men pretend to one, most men to both, and a great many to both in a high degree. It is not said that all men formally claim the right of

* If we say *wo be to you* Scribes and Pharisees, we are directly prosecuted for heresy.

private judgment, nor that many men use it to good purpose; but certainly all men act as if they thought they had that right. Even those that have written most for persecution for conscience-sake, pretend to write, not from interest, ignorance, or bias of any kind, but, O strange! from conviction: thus granting their opponents all they claim. Indeed, let men think and act as they will, the possession of intelligence, and the free use of that intelligence, are what all men naturally claim; not aware perhaps that the same arguments which justify that claim for themselves, do it also for others. A man of your sense will allow, that the most vulgar sayings of the common people as fully express their sentiments, and therefore ought to be allowed the same weight in settling the common sense of mankind on any subject, as the politer dialect of the well-bred man. A groom condemns the principles and conduct of a peer. Hold your tongue, cries the house-steward, you saucy dog, my Lord will send you about your business if he knows what you say: *well, well*, replies the jockey, *you cannot hang me for thinking*. Go down to Billingsgate, bid Bess open you some oysters, and, when she begins to swear, reprove her, ask her whether she cannot take sixpence without cursing and swearing? *What's that to you?* says she, *pay for your oysters, and take yourself off, every tub must stand upon its own bottom.* See now, these are the claims of mankind. Impose silence on one, and he tells you plainly that you can do nothing more, he has another right beside that of speech, and

that he will exercise in spite of your teeth. Require the other to act as you do, and she tells you no, I am accountable for my conduct, not you. You will pardon this, and as a judge, trying a cause in which both the above were concerned, would hear both in their own language, so will you gather the common notion of the right in question from the untaught evidences now introduced.

Perhaps you will say, this is depraved reason. Well Sir. Will you go to the tribunal of refined reason? Shall Locke be judge? Shall my lord Mansfield? whose fine speech you sent with Dr. Furneaux's excellent book. Comparisons may be odious; but to what fine reasoner will you go, and not get a spirit of persecution condemned to go to the place from whence it came, from thence to the place of execution, and there to be hanged till it is dead, dead, dead? The Lord in mercy annihilate the name and the thing!

You will add, some great men have pleaded for it. Ah! This is too true:

> And as they are dispos'd can prove it,
> Below the moon, or else above it.

If learned men in the church of Rome argue for christianity against heathens and Jews, then the right of private judgment, the detestable character of a persecutor, the merit of those that suffer for conscience sake, are the topics; yea the catholic church of Rome has attributed a glory to exercises of these kinds which protestants never have. In their public masses they celebrate the merit of those martyrs that suffered for resisting the roman

heathen emperors, and plead that very merit, *the merit of resistance*, for the forgiveness of their own sins. A whole choir of monks will chant on the festivals of St. Laurence, and St. Vincent, and Saint nobody knows whom, the following elegant composition.

Ante REGEM accersitur,
Et de REBUS convenitur.
OCCULTIS ecclesiæ.

Sed NON CEDIT blandimentis:
Emollitur aut tormentis
ejus avaricia.

ILLUDITUR Decianus
Dum sustinet martyr sanus
pœnarum angustias

Dat minister caritatis
Hostibus exuperatis
gratiarum copias.

Furit igitur PREFECTUS
Et paratur ardens lectus:
Insultantis viscera crates urit aspera

Sudat martyr in agone
SPE MERCEDIS ET CORONÆ
Quæ datur fidelibus PRO CHRISTO certantibus.*

* To preserve in a translation the sense and air, or rather, the nonsense and *rimaille*, or *doggrel* of these monkish rhymes is not a little difficult. The following humble imitation may serve instead of a better to convey their meaning.

Before the *king* St. Laurence stands,
To answer all his high demands
about the church's *secrets*.

These are the saints, these the meritorious works on which the catholic votaries trust. But now turn the tables, let protestants take the liberty of doing what St. Laurence did, and lo! all the cathedral shifts about like the weathercock on the top: Self-interest is the pivot on which all turns. Old songs

> But flattery *could not* make him show.
> Nor punishment *prevail* to know
> Who kept the church's pockets.
>
> The martyr safe and sound sustains
> The most excruciating pains:
> And thus *befools* the emperor.
>
> This deacon who supplied the poor
> Gave his tormentors thanks moreo'er,
> And came off more than conqueror.
>
> The *Governor* then with rage ran mad,
> And clapped him on a gridiron bed,
> To roast him for his errors.
>
> The martyr in an agony groans,
> *In hopes of those rewards and crowns*
> Promised to *faithful* soldiers.

St. Laurence (if tales be true) was deacon of the church at Rome in the reign of Decius, under the prefecture of Cornelius Secularis, and was put to death for refusing to give the emperor an account of the money intrusted with him by the church for the use of the poor. If every thing else was credible in this story; the first magistrate in Rome roasting a man on a gridiron (a kind of punishment unknown to the romans) passes all belief. Blessed be God, subscription to this, either as an article of *truth*, or as an article of *peace*, is not required now in England. Time was when it would have been heresy to have doubted it. The reason of some, and the rhyme of others, have long ago banished these absurdities.

are suspended or forgotten, new ones composed, and all the burly monks swell their cheeks to the tune of

Sublimi in cathedra
Apostlolorum sede,
Fulgida lampada
Tribus et linguas judicantia.*

Even protestants take the same method. And (without diving now into these mysteries of sophistry,) it may be truly said that all mankind plead rationally for an exemption from persecution themselves, and that the same reasons conclude with equal strength for other people.

As to the holy scriptures, the man who pretends to derive persecution from them offers such an insult on the nature of religion in general, on the doctrines and examples of Christ and his apostles

To expose these legendary lies all hands were aloft at the reformation: nor was even the gravity of the venerable John Fox the martyrologist ashamed to expose the dreams of the monks thus,

St. Dunstan's harp hard by a wall,
Fast on a pin did hang-a;
Without man's help, with lies and all,
And of itself did twang-a.

Even the great Mr. Addison proposed to help forward the extirpation of popery, by putting upon the country girls fans, a concourse of people paying their respects to a rusty tenpenny nail.

* The meaning is, that *those illustrious persons, who succeed the apostles in the government of the church, have the power of of judging all nations, languages and people.*

in particular, on the common sense of the reader, and on the inspiration of the writers, that he deserves no reply. Indeed could it be proved that *compel them to come in* means any compulsion but that of evidence, it would be no hard matter to disprove the divinity, and destroy the authority of all the christian religion. It must be owned that many called deists are men of great learning and sense, but really nothing makes it so doubtful as the paltry way in which they attack the gospel. What signifies nibbling off the edges of a text with your criticisms Gentlemen? Take one, and the same truth is in an hundred more. What avails cavilling at the jagged edges of one poor period, which ought, you say, to be smooth and round? What good can you do by rumbling with rules of syntax? You may talk for ever about elucidation, and interpolation, and canons of interpretation. Alas! The people are prejudiced in favor of this religion, they think it a good one, and they are not frightened by all your learned labour. True, they no more examine this religion than they do your lucubrations; but however, now and then on a Sunday, when their cousins visit them, they hear their children read a scripture-lesson: *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's-sake hath forgiven you.* They do not practise this themselves indeed, but they wish the squire, and the parson, and the overseers would mind St. Paul:

They are sure times would be better if they did. Would you then lay *the ax* gentlemen *to the root of the tree?* Take a new method, prove that this religion teaches men to kill one another for conscience sake. Come, distil the redeemers doctrine, extract from his sermons faction, and passion, and rigour, and murder; expunge benevolence from his book, and persuasion from his lips; make Paul an inquisitor, and his master a pope, and then you will catch infidels by shoals. You won't angle, patiently angle as you do now, for now and then one disappointed scholar, your arguments will be popular, and will easily entangle all that have not eradicated the tender feelings of humanity. But if this cannot be done, if every boy that can read can discover that christianity establisheth liberty and love, *one will chase a thousand* of you, *and two put ten thousand to flight.* Persecuting christians caress religion as Delilah Samson, without knowing where its great strength lays.

If reason and scripture are against you, what says history? You may abridge the matter, and having surveyed the rise, the reign, and the ruin of persecution, you may briefly conclude that it is the greatest absurdity, the most egregious folly, the most preposterous crime that man ever inserted in his list of extravagancies. Did it ever answer the persecutor's end? Has it diminished the number of disputable points? Does it embellish the writings of its amanuensis? Are there not many errors that owe their being now wholly to their san-

guinary prohibitions? If there be a piece of salutary advice deducible from history it is *Let them alone,* for if the device be human *it will come to nought.* Yes, heresy may address you in the language of Job, *Are not my days few? Cease then and let me alone.* I shall be *carried from the womb to the grave,* I shall *go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.*

It may seem ungenerous to urge experience at this time of day, when nobody is hurt for conscience-sake. But let not so unkind an imputation be cast on hearts filled with unspotted loyalty, and profoundly devoted to the spirit of the present government. The truth is, the laws do not comport with the spirit of the legislators, and all that the late petitioners plead for, is to have the former harmonize with the latter.

An extensive acquaintance with the men authorizes the assertion, they are most conscientiously and intirely attached to the government. They are enthusiasts in praising his late majesty for declaring in Dr. Doddridge's case that he would not suffer the shadow of persecution in his reign. They applaud in the highest strains the lenity of his present majesty, and all they want is the total extinction of those penal laws which the government never use, and declare they never will. Is he an enemy to the house who would exchange some old fashioned lumber, some rusty swords, and clumsey blunderbusses, for furniture in the modern taste? Government, like a house, is fabricate

d f-

its inhabitants, the *gout** of the master should reform this, and *L'Esprit*† of the governors regulate that.

Three things are infinitely valuable to all men. Their children, their reputation, and their influence. You are a dissenter Sir, which of these are you not baffled in? You have initiated your son in the principles of religion and morality, you think it time now to give him tuition in a public seminary, you highly value the literati of the two universities, you could intrust them with introducing your son to a future course in the world, but alas! the lad must be deprived of all this, except he submits to the hardship of a *matriculation oath*, except he deserts a form of worship which he has hitherto been taught to approve, and conforms to a service (in your opinion) too superstitious. Not that college-oaths would hurt him, because Mr. Vice chancellor closes term with a general absolution. Let your own pastor found an academy. But who pray can lawfully endow an unlawful house? Send him abroad. But he is your only son, and you would be nigh to inspect him. What must a man do? Educate him himself; or else prefer conscience to latin and greek, and let him comfort himself with remembering that there were men of sense in the world before the foundation of Athens or Rome.

Is your reputation dear? However, dear as it is you shall be reputed ignorant, disaffected to government, *a setter forth of strange gods,* nobody

* *Taste.* † *The genius, temper, or spirit.*

shall trouble himself to examine you, yet all shall point at and reproach you; with good reason you are proscribed by law.

Does a good man wish to extend his influence for moral purposes? A very lawful desire. But he who could fill an office with credit to himself and honour to his country shall be excluded from every office. Why? He wears a long-skirted drab-coloured coat, says *thou* instead of *you*, and to complete his wickedness, cocks up his hat with hooks and eyes instead of loops. These sir are disqualifications for office.

All these, it is said, are small inconveniences, these ought not to be called persecution. That is, this is not the worst stage of the disease, this therefore is no disease at all. *The putting forth of the finger* and the *wagging of the head* differ from burning a man, only as the whelp that snaps your fingers differs from the dog that worries you to death. Christian ministers, *renounce these hidden things of dishonesty:* full of a belief of the goodness of your cause, boldly rest it on its TRUTH; you have nothing to fear, sooner or later truth and benevolence must reign triumphant. Take Calderwood for your example. When James I. had read his book called *Altar Damascenum* he was very uneasy: let not this disturb your majesty, said one of the bishops, we will answer the book. *Tush mon*, said the monarch, *what wid ye answer, 'tis nothing but scraptur and razon.*

Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

ON

SOPHISTRY.

Declamatores verò in primis sunt admonendi, ne contradictiones eas ponant, quibus facillime responderi possit: neu sibi stultum adversarium fingant.

QUINTILLIAN.

LETTER VIII.

SIR,

IT is a just remark of the wise man, that he who applies *his heart to know, to search, and to seek out wisdom*, when he has *counted* mankind *one by one*, will scarcely meet with *one among a thousand* among men, and fewer still among women, who attend to THE REASON OF THINGS, that is, who are capable of avoiding sophistry, and of admitting a close argumentation. Sometimes force, and sometimes fun supply the place of reason, and sanctify an argument by proxy. It is not long since a certain person, who could no otherways account for his ill-luck, ascribed his misfortunes to witchcraft, and swam the supposed witch to prove her guilt. An old gentleman who saw this tragi-comedy, though he detested the trial, yet believed the woman's witch-craft. Some of the neighbouring clergy endeavoured to convince the old gentleman both of the inhumanity of the trial, and of the absurdity of the notion. Pray, said he, gentlemen, do you believe that there were witches in the time of Moses? Undoubtedly we do. *Very well*, replied the good old man, *as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen*

Innumerable are the things that usurp the throne of reason, from the ferula in a country school to the finesse of a declaimer in a public assembly. To be sure every one knows best what pleases himself, and where nothing is at stake let men divert themselves with sophistry. But where men's dearest interests are in hand sophistry must be banished, and a close just reasoning pursued. How seldom is this the case!

Some mistake the question: as a late anonymous writer among the people called Baptists. The author addresses some of his brethren on the article of mixt communion, and endeavours to dissuade them from admitting to the Lord's supper any that had not been baptized by immersion: and thus to establish what he calls a strict communion. In order to prove the necessity of this, the writer undertakes to prove that baptism was administered by immersion to all the members of the primitive churches. He examines the nature, the subject, the mode, and the end of baptism; and by a too common inadvertence finishes the book without coming to the question. The question was not whether baptism was originally administered to adults on a profession of faith by immersion: In this it seems both agreed; but whether any indulgence ought to be granted to erring consciences? and if any, how much? But these were articles the good man never thought of.

Some suppose in arguing what their opponents do not grant. Gregory the great was guilty of this sophism, where he enjoined the bishop of Cagliari

to force Heretics and Jews to be baptized into the catholic faith: *for*, says his holiness, *if these converts be hypocrites, yet much will be gained by it, because at least, their children will become good catholics.* Really your holiness's infallibility has for once played you a slippery trick. Jews and heretics will not grant, and his Lordship of Cagliari must doubt whether, hypocrisy in a parent will generate sincerity in a son.

It is not worth while to class the various sophisms which have (inadvertently let it be hoped) dropped from the pens of some who have pleaded for intolerance against the petitioners. The profoundest respect is due to every man who contributes to the elucidation of a question of this kind, and though a freedom may be taken with the little excrescences and luxuriances of such writers, yet no disrespect is intended to their persons, nor any contempt cast on their doctrines, ministry, learning or benevolence.—The qualities of their arguments, not of the men that use them, are in dispute.

" Petitioning, say some, originated in principle. Some of the petitioners are arians. To them indeed a freedom from subscription may be desirable; but what have we to do with it, who subscribe nothing but what we believe? Beside, joining such men in such a request, would be doing all in our power to give them an opportunity of spreading false doctrine. It would be going back to popery by renouncing the doctrines of the reformation. It would reflect dishonour on his ma

jesty, and offend the clergy."—Loyalty to the king; respect to the clergy: faith in the thirty-nine articles: the piety of the reformers: the patronage of arianism: what a bundle of sophisms are here! 1. Who can prove that petitioning originated in principle? The contrary indeed might be proved. It would be easy to show that an entire liberty of search is an idea prior to all that is meant by principle here. 2. Suppose it did originate in an arian, what then? unless it was a part of his arianism what signifies its originating in the man? Now this is no part of arianism. Arianism belongs to speculation and DOCTRINE, this to practice and DISCIPLINE. Suppose a man should say, Sir, I beg you would not meddle with music, optics, surveying, or gauging, all these are the inventions of geometers, and geometry originated in Egypt, and if you do not take care they will make a mummy of you, and send you somewhere to be shown when you are dead.—That is, you would reply, the Egyptians, who first dealt in geometry, practised embalming also; cannot I receive one of their inventions without embracing both? 3. It is very questionable whether you do believe all you have subscribed upon oath. You make oath to the *truth* of so many articles, now their *truth* to you depends on their containing neither less nor more than you believe of the objects in question: but if the articles do really express your sentiments so exactly, how is it, when your ministers are received to ordination, that they read, and frequently print other creeds extremely different from what

they have subscribed? Allow you do believe all the articles, what is all that to the purpose? The petitioners do not enquire *what* you believe, but *why* you believe; not faith, but the power that produces it is the question. You do believe the established doctrines; the petitioners ask whether you believe them because they are established, and you answer, you do believe the doctrines. This is ingenious, but is it logical? 4. You say the arians need exemption from penal statutes, but you do not. Still this is questionable. Most certainly the doctrine preached in most places of worship does need toleration, and by the law is actually exposed to rigour. Pray does your *church read Bel and the Dragon for example of life and instruction of manners?* Ah! if Harry the VIIIth. should come again and want money, he would catch you all in a *præmunire*, all to a man without excepting one. Let it be granted that you are safe, is selfishness a part of your religion? and is it generous to forget your brethren now you are at court, as Pharaoh's butler forgat his friend Joseph? and after all, do you not know in your own consciences that liberty to be an arian, and liberty to be a calvinist, are cyons that grow out of the same stock? That is, they both proceed from a liberty of private judgment, which private judgment subjected to the magistrate deprives Calvin and Arminius, Arius and Socinus alike. At this rate, you have a right to be a calvinist only as long as the magistrate pleases; and should the magistrate think proper to reform the church again,

should he discard the thirty-nine articles, and establish the racovian catechism, how can you consistently with your own declarations complain? 5. Joining the petitioners, you add, is helping to spread false doctrine. No surely! Is arianism so self-evident that to propose is to propagate it? Is the divinity of Christ so badly supported by evidence that it must call in the sword? A fair opponent is not against granting his adversary every reasonable advantage, his conquest is the more glorious. Let the arians come forth boldly, let them propose all their objections, if the divinity of Christ be true, it will gloriously answer all: if not true, what interest have you in it? Spread false doctrine? As if the arians had reserved *in petto* some things not yet said? Why the subject has been exhausted, what can be added? Even say of all sorts of heretics, as one on another occasion, *they have said; they do say; they will say; and let them say.*

Nothing need be said to prove that *truth* has nothing to fear from examination in every point of light. If all parties would agree to a general search, perhaps all parties might lose something, but they would gain more than they lost, the *truth* would come out. A mind properly disposed to truth would not only not forbid any examination, but like some famous painters and printers, would reward such as could discover defects. But here lays the core of the misery, *hold fast without wavering* is the alpha and omega of every man's creed, be his creed composed when, where, by

whom, or of what it will. It is not worth while therefore to pursue these sophisms any farther. All that would say any thing to purpose, should show a just reason why a liberty claimed by one man, and allowed to him, should be denied to another man.

Let it not appear strange, if it be affirmed, that there is not a man in England, if he professeth to be of any religious party, but must of necessity be guilty of sophistry, if he denies the right of private judgment to the petitioners. All religions in the world consist of principles and practices, and the last are founded on the first. There is a God, is a principle of natural religion. That God is to be worshipped, is a practice arising from, and supported by that principle. Now is it not plain to a demonstration, that if a man of any religion in the world was to offer these two propositions to be received by another, he would profess to have examined them himself, appeal to the reason of the other, and offer to give evidence? That this is the only just and natural *ratio* of mankind is clear, and it is equally clear, that when they depart from this they plunge into sophistry.

Consider four facts. 1. All men claim reason for their own sentiments; their *own* reason; not a magistrate's, nor a priest's, nor any body's else. If any man can make good this claim for himself, is it not sophistry to deny it to another? 2. No man ever tried by the power of magistracy, to make a believer of an infant, an ideot, or a mad-

man. Why not? They have carcases and you have creeds! Yes, but reason is absent. Well, but where's the difference between an ideot in whom reason is absent, and a man of sense in whom reason is present, if the right of private judgment be denied to both? All the difference is, one CANNOT reason, the other MUST NOT. As well then make a believer without it. Lay by the sword to both, else you play the sophister. 3. The most bloody persecutors have pretended to reason heretics into truth, and have affected only to draw the sword when reason could not prevail. Hence the english reformers were first disputed at Oxford in public and afterward burnt. Hence all the parade of priests and friars, and bishops to confute and convert the martyrs in their cells, before they were brought out to execution. If religion be not received by examining, judging, and self-determining, why dispute? and if it be, why burn and destroy? Is not this cruelty and sophistry both? 4. It sometimes happens that the chief magistrate, the king, who should preserve the creed of his subjects, does not believe it himself. In such a case, who but a madman would dare to insult royalty with the thought of any corporal punishment? Whether a *tyrant* who tramples on the people's privileges may be resisted, is one question: but whether an *heretic*, who deprives no subject of a right, only does not believe as his subjects believe, may be resisted, is another. Now if *mere heresy* ought not to dethrone a king, how, without the help of sophism, can it be proved, that it ought to dis-

franchise a subject? An hereditary right to seven acres is as inalienable as an hereditary right to seven provinces, or to seven kingdoms; and in many respects more so; seeing the latter was originally granted to a reigning family for services to be rendered to the state; and the former descended from father to son free from such obligations. When that detestable monster James Clement assassinated Henry III. of France; when Ravillac, that execrable regicide murdered Henry IV. when several pretended to justify those wretched criminals by urging the *heresy* of these unfortunate princes; did not all Europe shudder at the thought?

To trace all these facts would be too tedious, let the first only be recalled, and for five minutes re-examined; all men claim the right of private judging, and are sophistical in denying it to their fellow creatures.

Paganism presents to view none greater than Socrates. He studied and taught philosophy in both its branches, natural and moral. The first is expressed in Plato's Ζητων τα τε υπο γην και τα ουρανια; and the last in Xenophon's Σκοπων τι ευσεβες, τι ασεβες . . . . . τι δικαιον, τι αδικον, &c. In settling his own notions he paid no regard to magistracy but to his dæmon, which, in all probability was that philosopher's term for right reason. In communicating it to others, he paid no regard to the sophists of the age, nor much, if any, to his own persuasion; all his aim was to set a young gentleman a thinking for himself, and to give a right turn to a habit of reasoning;

to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot.

In all this he followed NATURE, and so he did when he praised Homer for calling Agamemnon THE SHEPHERD *of his people* ποιμενα λαων. For he summed up all the regal virtues in one, that was, the rendering their subjects happy. Cicero's good sense was so delighted with his method of establishing truth, that he says he chose the dialogue way for this very reason; *here*, says he, *every doubt may be proposed, and answered.* This, adds he, is *vetus et Socratica ratio contra alterius opinionem disserendi.** Now all this is incompatible with force, and no pagan can can receive these principles and employ force without falling into sophistry. Plato however is guilty of this in his tenth book *de legibus.*

Pass from Paganism to Judaism. The first of that nation is undoubtedly Jesus Christ: To him the Sadducees once proposed a question relative to the doctrine of the resurrection, a doctrine which Jesus believed and taught, but which they denied. Remark how the Saviour dealt with Heretics. He derives their error from their ignorance of two things, the *scriptures* and *the power of God.* Had they examined the evidences of God's *power*, they would have known he *could*, and had they attended to the meaning of *scripture*, they might have known he *would* raise the dead. If ignorance produceth

* This is the ancient method which Socrates used to disprove an opposite opinion.

error, heresy can be removed by knowledge only. Jesus Christ therefore asks *have ye not read?* urges a text, and goes to reasoning about it. It is nothing to say the Jewish church tolerated such people, Jesus Christ himself only reasoned with them. When Saul, that glory of the Jewish nation, proposed to *cast down reasonings, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*, what weapons did he use? *I Paul myself* BESEECH YOU, BY THE MEEKNESS AND GENTLENESS OF CHRIST. This, you will say, is proof to christians, but not to Jews. Be it so. Hear that famous Rabbi Abarbanel, *on the end of sacrificing*. He says that there are three sorts of sacrifices established in the book of Leviticus, and he assigns to each a different end. The end of the *burnt-offering* was that man might fix his attention on the divine nature, and might perceive the immortality of his own soul; that the action of the fire, seperating the parts of the animal, and causing them to ascend, properly represented the ascent of the sacrificer's soul to God after its desolution; that it was burnt whole on altars dedicated to God, to express the return of the whole soul to God from whom it was derived; that for this reason, their wise men said that burnt-offerings related only to *the thoughts of the mind*; that Rabbi Levi had proved this from Job i. 5. *Job offered burnt-offerings according to the number of his children, for he said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God* IN THEIR

HEARTS: Whence we gather, adds he, that he who offered a burnt-offering meant to purge away the stains of his mind, A WICKED OPINION, or A WRONG THOUGHT, and to say to himself, *return unto thy rest my soul.* That the burnt-offering referred chiefly to the rational soul, which is the chief part of the man, he farther proves by Lev. i. 3. *he shall offer it of his voluntary will before the Lord,* and, says he, he that offers the sacrifice confesses that all the powers of his body, and all the operations of his mind, ought to be devoted to venerate and worship his creator, that this only he should desire, this only study, to unite himself to God; and, like the victim, to ascend on his altar. The sum is, that the burnt-offering was designed to attract and accustom men to love and study divine things, and to expiate their guilt when they had not done it. If the Jews believe the divine legation of Moses; if they receive the doctrine of burnt-offerings as their Rabbies teach, they throw a lustre over their ceremonial law by harmonizing it with the law of nature, they claim a right of private judging from the magistrate, and with christians reserve conscience only for God: Nor can a Jew allowing all this, force conscience without manifest sophistry.

Are not the roman catholics in the same predicament with the rest of mankind on this article? Do not they also reason well till their own turn is served, and then turn sophisters? That famous Jesuit Bourdaloue, in the xvi vol. of his works, *on the faith that conquers the world* speaks thus.

" To support persecution is one of the most dif-
" ficult things in the world. A man groans under
" his bondage, and a fund of *equity, rectitude,*
" and *conscience* in his soul, makes him a hundred
" times desire to shake off the yoke, and to free
" himself from such a *tyranny,* but his courage
" fails, and when he would execute his design, all
" his resolutions are fled. Now what can deter-
" mine, confirm, and render him superior to every
" trial? RELIGION. With the arms of the faith,
" he wards off every blow, he resists all attacks,
" he is invincible. There is not a friendship but
" he breaks, nor a society but he flies, nor a threa-
" tening but he contemns; neither hopes, nor in-
" terest, nor advantage but he sacrificeth to God
" and his duty. Such are the dispositions of a
" man animated with *the* SPIRIT *of christianity,*
" and supported by the faith which he professes.
" Thus he thinks, and thus he acts. The reason
" is, BEING A CHRISTIAN, HE ACKNOWLEDGETH,
" properly speaking, NO OTHER MASTER BUT GOD:
" or, acknowledging other powers, he considers
" them only as subordinate to the Almighty, right-
" ly elevating him above all without exception.
" ....How many inferior people and domestics
" have there been whom NO AUTHORITY could
" corrupt, nor divert from the path of exact pro-
" bity? What torments have millions of martyrs
" endured? Nothing has alarmed them, *ni les ar-*
" *rets des magistrats,** nor the fury of tyrants,
" nor the rage of executioners, nor the obscurity

* Neither the decrees of magistrates.

" of prisons, neither racks, nor wheels, nor fire, " nor sword. Now whence did these glorious sol- " diers of Jesus Christ derive this immoveable con- " stancy, but from that RELIGION which was so " deeply imprinted in their hearts?" How, *is Saul* " *also among the prophets;*

It is not father Bourdaloue alone that talks thus, topics of this kind make half the panegyrics of all the martyrs in the church of Rome. Bossuet and Flechier, Massillon the Cicero, and Fenelon the Longinus of France, all agree here. Is it not ten thousand pities that such men should change sides, and deny all they have advanced when protestants make the same claim? How easy would it be in such a case to entangle the whole roman catholic and apostolic church in a sophism!

Does the established church of England claim authority over men's consciences, or not? If she does not, why require subscription? If she does, why disown the spirit of persecution? Do the several sects of dissenters require this authority, or do they not? They cannot claim it by law, nor do they pretend to derive it from scripture. Why then are they not unanimous in humbly petitioning for an abolition of what themselves call an unjust claim? Do the people called methodists claim this authority? Whatever some clergymen so called may have pleaded for, most certainly their founder did not claim it for himself or for others. The reverend compiler of the late Mr. Whitefield's life relates an attempt of the two Erskines, and the associate presbytery, to make Mr. Whitefield

subscribe the solemn league and covenant. Among other proposals they offered to send two of their brethren with him to England, and two more into America to settle presbytery in each. Suppose, said Mr. Whitefield, a number of independents should come, and declare, that after the greatest search, they were convinced that independency was the right church government, and would disturb nobody if tolerated, should they be tolerated? No, replied these compassionate christians. And here very properly ended a conference, which Mr. Whitefield considered as an insult on the rights of mankind.—When Mr. Ralph Erskine, to engage Mr. Whitefield to preach only for them, urged, *we are the Lord's people. If others,* replied Mr. Whitefield *be the devil's people, they have more need to be preached to. For my part.* added he, *all places are alike to me, and if the Pope himself would lend me his pulpit, I would gladly proclaim in it the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

This is the professed, original spirit of genuine methodism, and if the people denominated methodists now, embrace other spirits, they have forgotten their founder's original plan, they have deserted the grand principle of CATHOLICISM taught them by the reverend Messieurs Whitefield, Wesleys, and others of their first ministers. they deprive their cause of its glory, and all their zeal for universal benevolence, professed for forty years, unmasks at last, or, to speak more favourably, at last degenerates into zeal for a party. Such gentlemen, as plead for intolerance, of this name,

are humbly requested to remember a just and sensible remark of the late Mr. Whitefield's on a sermon preached by a minister of the associate presbytery at the close of the conference above mentioned. "*The good man so spent himself in the former part of his sermon, in talking against prelacy, the common prayer book, the surplice, the rose in the hat, and such like externals; that when he came to the latter part of his text, to invite poor sinners to Jesus Christ, his breath was so gone, that he could scarce be heard.*" And this will always be the case; that learning, eloquence, strength, and zeal, which should be spent on enforcing *the weightier matters of the law, judgment, faith and mercy,* will be unprofitably wasted on *the tithing of mint. anise, and cummin,* on discarding or defending a bow to the east, or a rose in the hat. But let who will trifle thus, the bare idea of such a mission, and such a doctrine, as the people called methodists profess, is totally unintelligible, and intirely indefensible without the prior notion of universal toleration. In what city? In what village? In what church? In what barn have not the methodists cried EXAMINE YOURSELVES *whether ye be in the faith?*

In short, whoever looks attentively will find that the leading principles of the petitioners, as far as they relate to the subject in question, are the allowed or professed principles of all mankind, and it will be easy from hence to infer that universal toleration, when thoroughly understood, will meet with less opposition than may at first seem

from all ranks of men; all men, statesmen, merchants, churchmen, and princes above all, will find their account in it.

Happy the man whose mind does not float on the surface of christianity! whose soul, not content with the mere ceremonial, rises into the benign system of the gospel; who, neither benumbed by indolence, enslaved by prejudice, nor frightened by nominal bugbears, nobly dares to think and act for himself: a lover of truth, a friend of benevolence, an imitator of Christ, and of that God *who causeth his sun to rise on the just and unjust his rain to descend on the evil and the good.*

Whatever be the issue, worthy Sir, of this controversy, you will not refuse joining in that prayer which the established church directs her members to use on St. Simon and St. Jude's day; O ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO HAST BUILT THY CHURCH UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE HEAD CORNER STONE; GRANT US SO TO BE JOINED TOGETHER IN UNITY OF SPIRIT BY THEIR DOCTRINE, THAT WE MAY BE MADE AN HOLY TEMPLE ACCEPTABLE UNTO THEE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. Amen.

FINIS.

THE

HISTORY

AND THE

MYSTERY

OF

GOOD-FRIDAY.

[THE EIGHTH EDITION, PRINTED 1799.]

THE HISTORY, &c.

IT has always been accounted good policy in the church of Rome to withhold the holy scriptures from the laity, and to perform the public worship of Almighty God in latin, a language unknown to the people. A religion founded on the infallible judgment of one man, and requiring of all the rest of mankind an absolute submission to his dictates, ought not to be examined; for, should the people emerge from credulity, and rise into reason and faith, the bold pretender to infallibility would tumble from the pinnacle of pontifical dignity, into a gulf of universal contempt.

That wise and vigorous set of men, the protestant reformers, broke open the papal cabinet, exposed the pretended titles of the pope to public view, and did all in their power to simplify religion, and to reduce it to its original plainness and purity. They laid open the inspired writings, they taught the right of private judgment, and they summoned all mankind to enter into that liberty with which Jesus Christ had made them free.

If these men had a fault, it lay in the breadth of their scale; they aimed to convert whole nations at once, and to change their customs in a day. Many religious customs were incorporated with

civil rights; it was irreligion in ecclesiastics to exercise civil government, and it became therefore essential to the accomplishment of their plan to call in the aid of secular powers. Secular powers readily assisted them; but at the same time obliged them to keep measures with royal prerogatives, court factions, the intrigues of the old clergy, and the prejudices of the common people. They therefore left the reformation unfinished, and died in hopes that their successors would complete in happier periods what they had begun. Far from entering into this just and liberal design, we seem to have lost sight of it, and to have adopted principles subversive of the whole. We seem to have discarded piety, incorporated luxury, and the few, who have not given up all sense of shame, endeavour to conceal the scandal under a cover of superstition. Thus we affect modesty, and dance naked in a net to hide our shame!

Superstition is to religion, says one, what astrology is to astronomy; the foolish daughter of a wise mother. These two have long subjugated mankind. We have no objection in general against days of fasting and prayer; they have always the advantage of retaining a scriptural form of godliness; they are often edifying, and some times necessary. Nor do we find fault with those christians who make conscience of observing all the festivals of their own churches. They have a right to judge for themselves, and their sincerity will be rewarded. Neither will we suppose the English clergy to have been deficient in teaching their peo-

ple, that *all* practical religion divides into the two parts of *moral* obligations, and *positive* institutes; that the first are universal, unalterable, and eternal; and that the last were appointed by the legislature to serve the purposes of the first: but as the cause of moral rectitude can never be pleaded too often, nor the nature of it explained too clearly; as superstition is very apt to invade the rights of religion, and as numbers who have great interest in these articles have not leisure to trace them through folios, it may not be unseasonable, and we trust it will not be deemed impertinent, to expose to public view in brief, the history—the authority—the piety—and the polity of church holidays. To discuss one is to examine all, and we select for this purpose that day, on which, it is reputed, the founder of our holy religion was crucified, commonly called GOOD-FRIDAY.

The HISTORY *of* GOOD-FRIDAY.

Let no one blame an historian who does not begin before his records; it is not his fault, it is his virtue. Strictly speaking, all documents in protestant churches should be found in the holy canon; for the people of each church refer an inquisitive man to their clergy, their clergy refer him to their printed confessions of faith, and all their confessions refer him to scripture. There are many ceremonies in some protestant churches which do not pre-

tend to derive themselves from scripture immediately, but they were appointed, they say, by those who were appointed by scripture to ordain them. The examination of this appointment does not fall under this article, and we defer it to the next. At present we only observe, Good-Friday is a ceremony of this kind, and the original records of pure christianity say nothing about it.

Neither any one evangelist, nor all the four together, narrate the *whole* history of Jesus Christ, nor yet *all* the circumstances of those parts on which they enlarge most. St. John, the last of these historians, closes his history with a declaration, that *many things* relative to Jesus Christ were *not written*. The times of the birth and crucifixion of our Saviour are so written in these authentic records, that nothing certain can be determined concerning them. All who have pretended to settle these periods, are conjecturers, and not historians, as their variety proves. There is only one opinion in the whole christian world concerning the country of Jesus Christ, and the place of his nativity; all allow he was a Jew, and born at Bethlehem. We should be equally uniform in our belief of the times of his birth and crucifixion, had scripture as clearly determined the last as it had related the first. There are more than one hundred and thirty opinions concerning the *year* of his nativity, and the *day* of it has been placed by men of equal learning in every month of the year. There is a like variety of opinions concerning the time of his crucifixion. Let us respect

the silence of the oracles of God. No argument can be drawn from it to endanger christianity. A point of chronology is not an object of saving faith, nor is zeal for an undecided question any part of that holiness, without which none shall see the Lord. The inspired writers did not design to make laws about feasts, but to enforce the practice of piety and virtue.

The first congregations of christians consisted of native Jews, Jewish proselytes, and Pagans of different countries, and of divers sects. Each class brought into the christian church some of their old education prejudices, and endeavoured to incorporate them with the doctrine and worship of christianity. The apostles guarded against this unnatural union, and, during their lives, prevented the profession of it; but after their decease they were made to coalesce; and from this coalition came Good-Friday, and other church holidays. Christianity affirmed the facts—proselyte mathematicians guessed at the times—pretended scholars accommodated prophecy and history to the favourite periods—and devotional men, whose whole knowledge consisted in an art of turning popular notions to pious purposes, began to observe the days themselves: by the austerity of their examples they gave them a sanctimonious air to others, and so recommended them to the observation of all who chose to be accounted pious as well as wise.

We hear nothing of Easter till the second century; and then we find Polycarp, Anicetus, and others conferring on the time of keeping it, celebrating it at different times, and exercising a mutual toleration notwithstanding their differences. Jesus Christ was crucified at the time of the Jewish passover. The christians of Asia celebrated Easter on the *fourteenth* day of the moon, according to the law of Moses, on whatever day of the week it fell, so that if they kept some years a Good *Friday*, they also kept in other years Good *Monday*, Good *Saturday*, or Good *any* day; for the day of Christ's crucifixion must be at its due distance from the day of his resurrection. These eastern christians pretended St. John kept Easter so. The western churches used to observe the *Sunday* after the fourteenth day of the March moon, and they said St. Peter and St. Paul always did so. If these christians could not convince one another in times so near those of the apostles, it is not likely we should be able to determine the time of Easter now. We have then nothing more to add here, except that they debated and differed like christians; they tolerated one another, they communicated together, and the liberal temper of such disputants is always edifying, however idle we may think the dispute.

About the year 190, Victor I. then bishop of the church at Rome, had the audacity to excommunicate those christians who kept Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon. The excommunicated pitied his pride, and persevered in their practice.

The roman bishops intrigued, caballed, got councils called, and at length the council of Arles, held in the year 314, having no doubt the fear of God before their eyes, and being endued with more wisdom, more power, or more presumption than their predecessors, DECREED that *all* churches should celebrate Easter on the *Sunday* after the fourteenth of the moon of March, when that moon should happen after the vernal equinox. Eleven years after, the council of Nice confirmed this decree, and the Emperor Constantine enforced it by orders sent into all the provinces of the empire. The council did not think to provide for one difficulty which might arise; which might produce a new dissention, and throw down that idol, *uniformity*, which these christian Nebuchadnezzars had committed so many crimes to set up. The fourteenth day of the full moon in March might fall on a Sunday. It did so. A difficulty started, and different opinions followed. The eastern churches celebrated Easter on the day of the full moon, when it fell on a Sunday in March. The western christians deferred it to the Sunday following. How could a synod of 318 bishops, they were but men, foresee this difficulty!

In the seventh century, one of our petty kings, Oswy, having been instructed in the christian religion by Scotch monks, kept Easter after the Asian fashion; while his queen, who had been taught by a roman priest, observed it in the western way; and it sometimes happened, that his majesty was joyfully celebrating our Saviour's resur-

rection, while the queen was fasting on account of his crucifixion. To get rid of this inconvenience, the king summoned a council to meet at Whitby to determine the original time of Easter. The clergy on the one side rested their cause on tradition derived from St. John, while the clergy on the other urged that which came from St. Peter. The king was judge, the balance inclined neither way, and long was he perplexed with authorities quite equal; at length being informed, that, however great St. John might be, St. Peter kept *the keys* of the kingdom of heaven, the king very prudently took care of the main chance, declared for St. Peter, and Easter has fallen on a Sunday in England ever since.

Good Friday had the fate of all other holidays; it had a solemn service composed for it; and, being established by civil power, the people were obliged to fast—and to pray—and to say—and to sing—and so on to the end of the chapter.

When king Henry VIII. reformed the British church, although he discarded many festivals, yet he thought proper to retain Easter, and Lent its appendage. The old service was afterwards new vamped, and during the succeeding reigns of Elizabeth and the Stuarts many were persecuted for refusing to comply with it. That inestimable prince, William III. procured a toleration, the present august family protect it, and the inhabitants of this country now enjoy the liberty of keeping festivals or of renouncing them.

The history then in brief is this. Neither Good-Friday, nor any other fasts or feasts were appointed to be observed by the Lord Jesus Christ or his apostles. The time of Christ's birth cannot be made out, and that of his crucifixion is uncertain. Could we assure ourselves of the year, we could not prove that the Jews observed the regressions of the equinox, nor that they made use of accurate astronomical tables. No traces of Easter are to be found in the first century, nor for a great part of the second. When the first observers of it appeared, they could not make evidence of their coming honestly by it. Councils decreed that it should not be kept before the 21st of March, nor after the 20th of April. Some, however, kept it on the 22d of April, while others celebrated it on the 25th of March; others at times different from both, and others kept no day at all. Our ancestors murdered one another for variety of opinion on this subject; but we are fallen under wiser and better civil governors, who allow us to think and act as we please, provided the state receives no detriment; so that the language of scripture is spoken by the law of our country. *He who regardeth a day, let him regard it to the Lord; and he, who regardeth not a day, to the Lord let him not regard it.* What good christian can refuse to add a hearty Amen?

The AUTHORITY *of* GOOD-FRIDAY.

Dull and uninteresting as this poor subject may be as an article of history, it becomes extremely important, when it is foisted into the religion of Jesus Christ, enjoined on all christian people under pain of his displeasure, and considered as the livery of loyalty and piety. In such a case, the disciples of the Son of God are compelled to enquire, whose are we, and whom do we serve? His we are whom we obey.

Should a man form an idea of the christian church from reading the New Testament, in which Jewish ceremonies are said to be a yoke, which neither the Jews of Christ's time, nor their ancestors were able to bear—in which those rites are called weak and beggarly elements—rudiments of the world—shadows of good things to come, of which Jesus Christ was the substance—and should he then behold a christian church loaded with ceremonies of pagan and jewish extraction, there would naturally arise a violent prejudice in his mind against this modern church, and he would be obliged to enquire what Joab had a hand in this alteration.

It must be allowed, consummate wisdom—cool and unbiassed judgment—rectitude the most rigid—and benevolence and power the most extensive, are absolutely and indispensibly necessary qualifications in religious legislation. The nature of God and man—the relation of each to the other—and of both to all the countless conditions and

circumstances of all the rest of mankind—the kind of worship—and the manner of performing it—the necessary requisitions of justice—and the proper effusions of goodness—with a thousand other articles, form one grand complex whole, which would baffle all, except infinite penetration, in forming a system of real religion.

As an assumption of legislative power in religion is an ascent to the most elevated degree of honour, and as it requires a kind of submission to which human dignity is loth to bow, so, it must be supposed, the clearest evidence of a right to exercise it is naturally expected. No blind submission—no precarious titles—no spurious records—no popular clamour—nothing but clear revelation, expounded by accurate reasoning, can be taken in evidence here. An immortal intelligence is the noblest production of infinite power and skill; when it pays its homage to the Deity it is in its noblest exercise, and no mean guide must conduct such a being then.

On these just principles I take up Good-Friday where I find it, as part of the established religion of my country, and I modestly enquire the authority that made it so. A few old women refer me to the fourth verse of the twelfth of Acts for the word *Easter*, and I return the compliment by referring them to their grandsons at school, who say St. Luke wrote *passover*. I could, were I inclined to revenge, be even with these old ladies by telling the tale of Lady Easter, Ashtar or Ashtaroth, a Sidonian toast: but I am too busy and too

placid now, and I take my leave of this goddess, and also of the godly translator, who profaned a jewish fast by nick naming it after a pagan prostitute, and laid the blame on innocent St. Luke.

The established clergy do not pretend to support their festivals by authority of scripture; but they say their legal authority arises from that act of parliament which ratified the thirty nine articles of their faith, one of which affirms, *the* CHURCH *hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith.* This clause is said by them to mean, that the "governors of the church have power to determine what shall be received and professed for *truth* among the members of the church, and to bind them to *submission* to their sentence, though they err in their sentence." These are their own words.

These thirty-nine articles were first produced in a convocation of the clergy in the year 1562—they were reviewed by another convocation in 1571—and were afterwards ratified by parliament. It is an unquestionable fact, that the religion of all the good people of the church of England was, in 1562, put to the vote of one hundred and seventeen priests, many of whom could hardly write their names, and several of whom were not present, and voted by proxy, and that ceremonies and holidays were carried by a majority of *one* single vote, and that given by proxy. Whether the absent member, who had the casting vote, were talking, or journeying, or hunting, or sleeping, is immaterial, he was the God Almighty of this article

of English religion, and his power decreed rites and ceremonies, and matters of *high behest.*

The insertion of the above clause of the CHURCH's *power* in the twentieth article was an infamous piece of priestcraft. It is not in king Edward's articles. It is not in the original manuscripts subscribed by the convocation, and still preserved in Bene't college, Cambridge, among the papers of bishop Parker, who was president of the assembly. —It was not in the printed book ratified by parliament—It was not in the latin translations of those times—nor did it dare to shew itself till twenty-two years after, as Heylin, and other high churchmen allow.

Subscription to this clause is mere mummery; for what does it mean! The *church* power to decree rites and ceremonies! An absolute falshood. One person in this church, and one person only hath power to decree rites and ceremonies: the common people pretend to none. The clergy have introduced organs—pictures—candles on the communion table—bowing towards the east—and placing the communion table altar-wise: but they had no right to do so: for as the Common Prayer book no where enjoins them, they are expressly prohibited by the act of uniformity, which says no rites or ceremonies shall be used in any church—other than what is prescribed and APPOINTED to be used in and by the Common Prayer book. By what effrontery does a priest allow organs in public worship, after he has subscribed to the truth of an homily, which declares them superstitious! Or

with what presumption does he dare, in direct opposition to act of parliament, to invade a prerogative that belongs to the crown! Neither a convocation, nor an house of commons, nor an house of lords, nor all together have a power to decree rites, ceremonies, and articles of faith in the established church of England; the constitution has confirmed it as a royal prerogative, and annexed it to the imperial crown of this realm.

In former times our kings ceded this prerogative to the pope; at the reformation they reclaimed it; and long after the reformation they refused to suffer the other branches of the legislature to examine, or to meddle with it; but in later times this prerogative was bounded, and now it is restrained to the national established church. By the act of toleration the crown agreed to resign, and in effect it did actually resign this prerogative in regard to the nonconformists, and this cession is become a part of the constitution by the authority of the whole legislative power of the British empire. The mode of restraint, indeed, is not so explicit as it might have been; but the fact is undeniable.

The English nonconformists think civil *government*, natural, necessary, and of divine appointment —they suppose the *form* of it arbitrary, and left to the free choice of all nations under heaven: they believe the form of *mixt monarchy* to be the best; but were they in Venice they would yield *civil* obedience to aristocracy; in Holland to a republic, or in Spain to an absolute monarchy; the best mode of civil government making no part of their religion.—They

think in all states impliedly, and in the British most expressly, there subsists an *original contract* between the prince and the people—they believe the *limitation* of regal prerogative by bounds so certain, that it is impossible a prince should ever exceed them without the consent of the people, one of the principal bulwarks of civil liberty:—they think there are *ordinary* courses of law clearly established, and not to be disobeyed, and they believe there are *extraordinary* recourses to first principles, necessary when the contracts of society are in danger of dissolution—they think these principles alone are the *basis* of prerogative and liberty, of the king's title to the crown, and of that freedom which they enjoy under his auspicious reign; and these, their sentiments, are those of the wisest philosophers—the ablest lawyers—and the most accomplished statesmen that Britain ever produced.

The English nonconformists absolutely deny all *human* authority in matters of religion—they deny it to *all* civil governments of every form—they think Jesus Christ the *sole head* of the christian church—they say the *Scriptures* are his only code of conscience law—all the articles of their belief are contained in *his* doctrine—all their hopes of obtaining immortal felicity in *his* mediation—all their moral duties in the great law of nature explained by *revelation*—and all their religious rites, and ecclesiastical law, in *his* positive institutes unexplained, or rather unperplexed by human creeds.—They say Jesus Christ himself does not require obedience *without evidence*—that they

submit to him, *as God gave him*, as a prophet, a priest, and a king, on the fullest proof:—they say their religion has nothing hostile to *civil government*, but is highly beneficial to it—that although it is no part of it to determine the best form, yet it is a part of it to submit in civil matters to the powers that be. On these principles they justify the apostles for embracing christianity, when religious governors rejected it—the first missionaries, who subverted established religions by propagating it—the reformation from popery—and the revolution, that dethroned high church tyranny. For their civil principles they are ready to die as *Britons*, and for their religious ones as *Christians*.

But we have lost *Friday!*—No wonder. Good-Friday is a libel against the king of kings, and always when loyal subjects approach him, [illegible] lurks behind, skulks among popes and priests, hides his guilty head in a cowl, muttering—*the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies.* Ah Sirrah!

The article of authority, then, amounts to this. In that system of religion, which goes on the principles of the perfection and sufficiency of scripture, and the sole legislation of Jesus Christ, church holidays are non-entities. In those systems which allow human authority, they rest on the power that appoints them. In this happy country, the power that appoints them is constitutionally bounded, and has agreed to spend its force on as many as choose to submit to it, and to exert itself against all who dare to impede others, who choose

to renounce it. So that the authority, which appoints a Good-Friday ceremonial, has just as much influence over a British subject, as he himself chooses to give it. If he choose to be a member of the national church, to which certainly there are many worldly inducements, he allows human authority over conscience, and he ought in conscience (if it be possible for conscience to agree to its own dissolution) to keep the fast: but if he think proper to dissent, to which certainly there are strong religious inducements, he is protected in disowning the authority, and the obligation is void. When human wisdom affects to adorn a religion of divine revelation, it presumes to paint a diamond, or to lace and embroider the seamless coat of one, whose simplicity is his evidence and his churches glory. When such as Austin and Gregory, primitive manufacturers of trumpery, imported their bales, and offered their wares to the British church, they were objects of pity or contempt; but when they presumed to use coercive measures to make the denizens of heaven purchase their trash: when a pope like Judas came in the night with halberds, and swords, and staves; when, worse than he, the traitor did not bring even a lanthorn to enable men to read his commission—Merciful God! couldest thou be angry with our ancestors for hand-cuffing the felon, and whipping him out of their isle! The punishment was too little for the crime. They should have burnt even his rags with fire!

The fury fiend with many a felon-deed,
Had stirred up mickle mischievous despight.

The PIETY *of* GOOD-FRIDAY.

If piety be the discharge of duty towards God, there are only two short questions to answer. First, is the observation of an annual fast in commemoration of the death of Christ, a *duty* required by Almighty God? Next, how is this duty *discharged* by those, who think it a duty.

All duties, which God requires of all mankind, are contained in the moral law. Moral obligations are founded in the nature and fitness of things. There is a fitness between the care of a parent, and the obedience of a child. Filial obedience is therefore a moral duty. There is a fitness between civil government and taxes. Governors protect subjects, and subjects ought therefore to support governors. Taxes for the necessary support of government are therefore dues, and the payment of them moral obligation: but nobody ever yet pretended to make the celebration of Easter, a part of the moral law.

The other class of duties required of all christians is contained in positive institutes. Baptism is a positive institute; the celebration of the Lord's supper is a positive institute. They would not have been obligatory, they would not have been known, had not the christian legislator instituted them; and they are obeyed now they are appointed in proper submission to his authority. But has he appointed this fast? Does it not wander about a mere beggar actually destitute of every token of a legitimate divine institute?

Since, then, the observation of this day is no part of piety, we are driven, for want of materials to fill up this article in decent guise, to the sad necessity of turning the tables, and of considering the *impiety* of this black, this bloody Friday. Were we to collect into one aggregate sum the impious actions that belong to the introduction, the establishment, the support of ceremonies, one of which is this day; were we to balance accounts between moral law, and human institute, we should be obliged to charge to the latter a most enormous and ruinous sum. We should set down the unwarrantable implication of the imperfection of christianity as Jesus Christ appointed it—the incorrigible obstinacy of judaizing bunglers, who united a provincial ritual with an universal religion—the rash enterprizes of minute philosophers, who associated the mummeries of Belial with the miracles of Christ—the paltry babbling of traditionists, whose impertinence put them on pretending to give evidence to wise and grave men by their senseless repetitions of, I heard say, that he heard say, that she heard say, that they heard say—the self-employed and uncommissioned racket of councils—the daring atchievements of those knights errant the popes of Rome—the base concessions and self contradictions of their hierarchical squires—their flattering, betraying, befooling, deserting, and assassinating emperors and kings—the subverting of all sound maxims of civil polity, every dictate of right reason, the sacred

bonds of society and the natural rights of mankind—the degrading of magistracy, the banishment of thousands, the blood shedding.....(O where shall we end?)....All these under a mask of hypocrisy,—a pious pretence of uniformity—the erection of *a godlye order in christen states amonge the holye flock that Jesu boughte with hys owne bloode!* I know I shall be reputed a silly enthusiast for what I am going to say; but what care I? When the bells chime to call people to celebrate Good-Friday, methinks they say to me, *count the cost....thinking christian, count the cost*—I do so, and I weep....Am I not a fool?....I can't help it....I pour out floods of tears to think what human ceremonies have cost all mankind, and particularly what a dreadful price my native country has paid for them; and I wish with Luther, that there were no feast-days among christians, except the Lord's day.

All christians are not of our opinion. Some think the observation of this day a duty of religion. Very well. I wish to be instructed. Permit me to see how the duty is discharged.

The far greater part of the members of the established church pay no regard at all to Good-Friday, nor do some of them know why it is appointed. There is no piety surely in professing a religion, which is neither understood nor obeyed. The greater part of opulent members of this community pay no other attention to the day than dining on fish in preference to flesh. This is not piety. Numbers of the clergy read the ritual, and deliver

a sermon composed by others, and this is their whole performance. Most artificers, and people of the lower class, imitate their superiors. Some of them do not observe the day at all, and others, who hate work worse than witchcraft, go in the morning to church, and in the evening to the alehouse, and there deposit piety till Easter Sunday, and then travel the same round again. Should a man lay aside secular affairs, abstain from food, dress in black, go to church, say after the parson, hear the sermon, and close the day without company and cards, who but a methodist would pretend to arraign the conduct of this man? And yet, most certain it is, he may do all these without performing one act of genuine piety.

In short, there are two general parents of religious action, custom and conscience. The first germinates, and produces a blind, sordid, sorry, crawling lusus, denominated religion, but really superstition. The latter, conscience, may be enervated by ignorance, sloth, scrupulosity and secular interest; and in this ill state of health may produce a weak family of genuine moral virtues, and of silly deformed superstitions; but, being right in the main, she will always pay her first and chief attention to her moral offspring. Positive institutes, and even human inventions, may be obeyed by people of this kind; but they will never encroach on the rights of natural, necessary, moral law. If the ceremonial of religion supply the place of religion itself—if the former derogate from the

latter—if the former divert the attention from the latter—it becomes a reprehensible superstition.

What then shall we say of those, whose whole piety lies in the observation of *days, and times, and years?* We know what an inspired apostle said to such people; *I am afraid I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.* Father of universal nature! in vain hast thou given us capacity, learning, reason, and religion—in vain does the knowledge of all antiquity shine around us—in vain has the law of nature been explained to us by the writers of revelation—in vain hast thou bestowed thy best and richest gift the gospel on us, and a government that allows us to judge of it—we live in the open violation of all thy laws—we curse, and swear, and blaspheme—we prophane thy holy sabbaths—we are guilty of drunkenness, debauchery, perjury, simony, bribery, impiety, and irreligion of all kinds—our children are uneducated in religious principles—our property is wasted in gaming and amusements—our priests and our prophets exemplify luxury—and we expect to avert all our deserved miseries, and to atone for all our impieties, by saying, have we not fasted on Good-Friday, and feasted on Easter-Sunday? The Jewish priests, at the worst of times, prophesied for hire; but some christian priests take the hire and prophesy not. They vote indeed! but say, ye plundered Nabobs! ye French Canadian papists! ye widows and orphans! ye depopulated cities, and ruined commerce of rebellious colonists! say, for what do British ministers of the prince of peace vote?....

They vote that yon wheelwright's children must fast on Good-Friday! This leads us to the last article.

The POLITY *of* GOOD-FRIDAY.

Before christianity was understood in the world, the first apologists for it *thought themselves happy*, as St. Paul expresses it, when they were called to defend it before equitable civil magistrates in courts of legal judicature. They had great reason to rejoice in these opportunities, for they taught a religion, which recommended itself to all just governments by its perfect agreement with civil polity. Primitive christianity wanted only to be known, it was sure to gain ground by being understood. These divine men were able to say—Is the origin of civil government sacred? We teach, that civil government is ordained by God.—Is the well-being of the whole, the supreme law in civil polity? So it is in christianity.—Do states flourish, when the people yield a ready obedience to civil government, and venerate the dignity of magistracy? Christianity inculcates this.—Do temperance, industry, piety, and virtue render states happy? Christianity forcibly inculcates these.—Are states happy when discords do not prevail, when kind offices abound among citizens, when benevolence and philanthropy pervade the whole? Christianity abolishes party factions and odious distinctions, and curbs the passions that produce them; and as to universal love it is the religion of Jesus

itself.—Do states enjoy tranquillity when learning and liberty, conscience and virtue are nourished, and when impartial equity rewards merit, and restrains and punishes vice? Christianity does all these.—Are states safe, when they retain a constitutional power of redressing grievances, of insuring life, liberty, and property from foreign and domestic invasion, and of reducing all cases to one invariable standard of impartial and universal justice? Christianity inculcates principles productive of all this. No instance therefore can be produced of our attempting to subvert civil government; on the contrary, we are entrusted with a conciliating plan of universal peace between secular and sacred things by Jesus Christ.

The corruptors of christianity deprived it of this noble plea; they bartered purity for power, exchanged argument for authority, and made a scandalous truck of all the truths and virtues of religion for the seals of a prince, and the keys of a jail. They invented words of inexplicable mystery, and inflicted penalties on those, who could not interpret their dreams—they cast innumerable canons, and with them destroyed the lives, and liberties, and properties of their peaceable brethren —they armed priests with secular power, and covered their barbarous use of it with infinite pomp —they excited princes to hate, persecute, banish, and burn their subjects for matters of conscience— they thought lay subjects beneath notice, kings above law, and themselves above kings. To their

conduct it is owing, that most great men consider religion as nothing more than an engine of state.

We hope christianity in time will recover from these deadly wounds; but healing and health must never be expected from such prescriptions as are made up of the false principles that produced the hurt. The great, the only object of such books as Hooker's church polity, and Gibson's Codex, is the support of the hierarchy. God knows, no positions can be less true, no principles more dangerous than those laid down in these compilations. Civilians, sufficiently feed, could build the whole fabric of popery on them; for the evident drift of them is not only to render the church independent of the state; but to place the state in a condition of dependence on the church. Their system is false in itself—inconsistent with scripture—incompatible with the British constitution—and destructive of Christ's spiritual design. These writers have lodged their sentiments in the dark caverns of metaphorical style, and there they lurk in seeming asylum. There is an imaginary being called the *church* governing, distinct from the church governed—this animal has *sex*, in violation of the english language, and the laws of precise argumentation—*she* is either married or a prostitute, for she is a *mother*, it seems, and has children. All this may be rhetorick; but nothing of this is reason, less still can it be called religion, and least of all is it that religion which Jesus taught, and which never diminishes the glory of civil polity.

The religion of Jesus is the most simple thing in the world. His church was not formed on the plan of the Jewish government, either of the state, temple, sanhedrim, or synagogue—nor on that of any other state, either that of Rome, or that of Athens.—The decree of the christian church at Jerusalem, called by mistake the *first council*, was advice; but not law.—Canons in the primitive church were opinions devoid of coercion; the emperor Justinian adopted them, and metamorphosed them into civil law—there were in the primitive church no coercive powers—particular churches were united only by faith and love—in all civil affairs they were governed by civil magistrates, and in sacred matters they were ruled by the advice, reasons, and exhortations of their freely elected officers—their censures were only honest reproofs, and their excommunications were nothing more than declarations that the offenders were incorrigible, and were no longer accounted members of their societies—the term *hierarchy* was unknown, and *hierodulia* would have been the proper description then.—It was a spiritual *kingdom not of this world;* it did not injure, it could not possibly injure sound civil polity. The primitive christians were taxed with holding seditious principles; and this calumny they merited for not getting drunk on Cæsar's birth day—for holding their religious assemblies in the night, when secular business was over—for refusing to swear by the genius of Cæsar—for scrupling to give him the titles that belonged to God—for talking of a kingdom of saints upon

earth. However, these sons of sedition prayed for Cæsar—taught all due obedience to him—paid his tribute—fought in his wars—treated all inferior magistrates with profound respect; and these things they did not for prudential reasons of worldly policy, but from examined and adopted principles of genuine christianity.

The whole farrago of a secular religion is a burden, an expence, a distress to government, and every corrupt part and parcel of it is some way or other injurious to civil polity. Consider a kingdom as one large family, sum up the priesthood into one domestic chaplain, compare what he costs with the good he does, and judge whether the family gains as it ought, or loses as it ought not by his chaplainship.

To come to the point. We apply these general strictures to one article, consisting of fasts, feasts, and holidays. We divide these into five classes, and discharge four of them. In the first we place all those *obsolete* holidays, which were in vogue before the Reformation, such as the Assumption—the Conception—Silvester—Britius—and such like, which were very properly retained in the calendar at the Reformation for law uses, for the ascertaining of the times of tenures, and of the payment of dues—or of charitable donations, that were dated by these days. In a second class we put all the *Sundays* in the year; for although some divines hold the morality of the Sabbath, and others place it among positive institutes, yet all agree in the necessity of keeping a day, and a pious clergy

know how to improve it to the noblest uses of church and state. In a third we put all *red-letter days*, as coronation days, birth days, and others. The suspending of business on those days is a very proper compliment to our civil governors, and the health and spirits of gentlemen confined in public offices require relaxation and exercise. Nobody pretends to make religion of these, and they are on many accounts quite necessary. In a fourth class, we put all those *Saints' days*, and other holidays, which the clergy are obliged by their superiors to observe. They ought not to complain, if they are required to fast on the 30th of January for the expiation of a crime, which no man alive committed; for they are amply rewarded by many a festival, from which none but themselves ever derived the least benefit. All these we dismiss, and retain only a fifth sort of holidays, which constitution and custom engage the whole national church to observe; the smallest number of these is TEN. A very little attention will convince us, that the observation of these ten holidays is productive of no real advantage; but, on the contrary, of much damage to the nation at large.

As these festivals are generally observed, they hurt the health, the morals, and the little property of the poor—they depress virtue, encourage vice, and generate superstition—they clog business, burden the clergy, increase the rates of parishes, endanger the peace of society at large, perplex magistrates—in a word, they impoverish the kingdom in proportion to the extent of their influence.

To examine only one of these articles: Suppose a day labourer employed all the year at seven shillings a week, that is, at fourteen pence a day: ten days of his time are worth to his family eleven shillings and eight pence. Not to earn is to pay, and this poor fellow is actually at the annual charge of eleven and eight pence for the support of annual festivals. Let us suppose further, that his wife earns six pence a day, and his four children four-pence each, at spinning, stone gathering, or any other work; ten days of the woman's time are worth five shillings; ten days of each child are worth three and four-pence. So that this man's wife and children pay for festivals eighteen shillings and four-pence a year. We are further to add the extraordinary expences of this family on these days; for it is all a farce to talk of their fasting, they have no fasts in their calendar, all are festivals with them, and they never fast when they can get victuals. We allow the poor man, then, one shilling on each day to spend at the alehouse, and his family one more for tea, beer, nuts, gingerbread and so on. We are to add then twenty shillings more to his account, and his reckoning stands thus:

	£.	s.	d.
To 10 days work at 1s. 2d. each —	0	11	8
To 10 days ditto of wife, at 6d. —	0	5	0
To 10 days do. of 4 children, 4d. each per day	0	13	4
To 10 days extra expences for self and family, at 2s. per day — — —	1	0	0
Total	2	10	0

Is not the sum of fifty shillings enormous for this family; a heavy tax paid for a cargo of idleness! Let us suppose this poor man to enter thoroughly into the pretended design of the day, to abstain from food as well as work, to fast and pray, and spend nothing, still the fast costs him all the money that he avoids earning, and this simple devotee would pay twenty or thirty shillings a year for the privilege of emaciating himself.

But the people derive great advantages from festivals! .... Good God! is religion magick! What people derive advantages from festivals? They, who never attend them? It is notorious the poor are not to be found at church on Easter and Whitsun holidays. Inquire for the London populace at Greenwich, and for the country poor at the sign of the Cross Keys. To say they might reap benefits, and they ought to pay for the liberty, is equal to saying, the sober populace might get drunk at the Dog and Duck, and they ought to pay the reckoning of those who do.

Whatever advantages they derive from church-holidays, many of their neighbours derive great disadvantages from their sinking fifty shillings annually to support them. This poor fellow should pay thirty shillings a year rent for his cottage; but the landlord never gets it, yet he would thank him to pay his rent by ten days work for him. He can pay no rates to the parish, nor any taxes to government; yet were he allowed to earn fifty shillings a year more than he does, he could pay both, and save money to buy a pig, or a bullock, or firing

too. He owes something to the doctor for physic, and something to the shop for food, debts contracted in lyings in and illness; he can pay none of these driblets; yet he could pay all, were he allowed to earn fifty shillings a year more, and to deposit it for payment of debts in his master's hands. Moreover, he got drunk on the feast of the Epiphany, which he, a heathen, called Twelfth night—set up a score at the alehouse—rolled in the dirt—spoiled his clothes—lost his hat—fought with Sam Stride, who sent him a lawyer's letter, for which he paid six and eight-pence, beside a guinea to Stride to make it up—and on the same night he gave Blue Bridget nineteen pence for the liberty of leaving a bastard to the parish—magistrates were tormented with warrants, and oaths, and depositions—peaceable subjects with the interruptions of riot and debauchery—the whole business of the parish stood still—and the industrious were obliged to pay out of their honest gains the whole expence at last.

What! it will be said, would you keep these people in eternal employment, and allow them no holidays? I would keep them in perpetual employ. Six days they should labour, and do all they have to do; the seventh, being the sabbath of the Lord their God, the clergy should so perform divine service as to engage them voluntarily to choose to fill a religious assembly; their children should be catechised, and rational and agreeable pains should be taken to instill the great principles of religion into them; they should be taught a practice

of piety, and a course of virtue; religion should be unmasked and exposed in its own beauty to their view: at present it appears to them an unmeaning encumbrance of expensive forms. Their infants are questioned, and sprinkled—their wives pay a shilling and are churched—they are generally funny at a wedding, and feel no expence but the ring—they eat cross buns on Good-Friday—they are merry at Easter—and mad at Christmas—they pay small tithes through life—and are buried in form when they die—and they call this the Christian Religion in the best constituted church in the world, and abuse all who thing otherwise as knaves and fools, ignorant of God and disloyal to the king! As to holidays, let the poor take as many as they can afford, and their masters can spare. Far be it from us to wish to abridge their liberty, or diminish their little enjoyment of life: but let us not make religion of their gambols, nor enroll their pastimes among the laws of Jesus Christ.

There were in the ritual of our ancestors above two hundred festal days, many of them in seed-time, hay-time, and harvest. Great complaints were made to parliament: the church, it was said, would ruin the state. While the people were telling beads, and the priests chaunting and spouting away, the corn lay rotting in the fields, cattle were neglected, commerce was at a stand, and the nation was starving. The legislature struck off, first, harvest-holidays, and then others, and what remain were left for a decoy to papists, to the great grief of

numbers, who submitted to them, and who wished to get rid of superstition, the root and the rind of popery.

If any imagine these festivals necessary for the sake of informing people of the events that are commemorated on them, and of preserving and perpetuating the remembrance of them, we only beg leave to ask—Where was Christianity so well understood as in the primitive churches, which celebrated none of them? Where is the Christian religion less understood than in the Roman community, where they are celebrated without end? Who understood Christianity best, our Saxon ancestors, who had many festivals, or our immediate parents, who had few? Is religion better understood in those reformed churches where they are celebrated, than in those where they are omitted? Does religion consist in the bare remembrance of a few events in the life of Jesus Christ? May not all the ends proposed by the observation of church-holidays be better answered without it? Do we not sacrifice many great advantages, and put ourselves to unnecessary inconveniences and expences for mere shadows, which can never be substantiated without civil coercion? Is not the likeliest method to make the clergy loath the necessary parts of their office, the obliging of them to drudge alone in unnecessary exercises?—Many articles are omitted—under-rated—and half reasoned—but we have said enough—perhaps too much—on the ill polity of Good-Friday.

SHOULD any parish priest of genuine and generous piety (for to sycophants and bigots we have nothing to say) who loves God, reveres his king, wishes well to his country and to all mankind—should such a man say, I mourn for the vices and calamities of my country, and I dread those chastisements of providence, which national sins deserve; I wish to contribute my mite to the public good; but I know no better way of promoting it than by inculcating the observation of fasts and feasts, and approved rituals. I would venture to say to him—.

Reverend Sir! I give you credit for being a man too wise to quibble about style, where matters of the highest importance are in hand; and too good to be offended with the honest bluntness of one, whose reigning passion is to wish felicity to all mankind. Pardon me, then, if I take the liberty to say—The cool, disinterested part of mankind consider a hierarchy as they consider a standing military force. In absolute monarchies, where the main principle of the constitution is that of governing by fear, an hierarchy is essentially necessary to the despotism of the prince; but in free states an hierarchy will always justly be an object of jealousy. Hierarchical powers have found many a state free, and reduced each to slavery: but there is no instance of their having brought an enslaved state into christian liberty. Your country, Sir, is almost the only one in the universe, in which civil liberty is the very end and scope of the constitution. You should therefore acquaint youself well

with all the singular polity of this country, which is governed by a system of laws all tending to the one great design, civil liberty, and you should not put off the man, the citizen, and the christian, when you put on the clerical character.

You profess a religion, Sir, which agrees with civil polity; you know how some of your order have deprived it of this glory by resisting or duping their civil governors in order to aggrandize themselves. Recover that character to christianity, which those crimson tools of a desperate cause, Austin and Lanfrank, Dunstan and Anselm, Thurstan and Becket, Longchamp and Peckham, Arundel and Chichley, Woolsey and Bonner, Parker and Whitgift, Bancroft and Laud, have vilely squandered away. Leave secular affairs to secular men. Have no more to do with commissions of the peace, county elections, commission for roads, the civil affairs of hospitals, corporations, and so on, than what you cannot possibly avoid. You may have rights as a gentleman; but it is not necessary you should lay aside the character of a gentleman for the sake of asserting them. Civil government administered by clerical men always inspires the lay gentry with jealousy, and the poor with contempt. In your office, be no aspiring statesman's tool for filthy lucre's sake. Do not dare to lift your unhallowed hand against the sovereign's title to the crown, and the people's right to liberty, by brandishing the obsolete and execrable doctrines of passive obedience, non-resistance, the divine

rights of kings, and all the unconstitutional positions, which the supreme legislature consigned to eternal oblivion at the glorious revolution. Your superior may put you on uttering what he dare not utter himself, in order to feel the popular pulse, and he may procure interested hirelings to applaud you, and promise that preferment to you, which he intends for himself. If you perish in the attempt, what cares he? But do not deceive yourself. The present royal family will never prefer men of arbitrary and unconstitutional principles. His majesty perfectly comprehends the British constitution, and as he magnanimously aspires at the glory of reigning over a free people, who have confidence in his wisdom and goodness, it is impossible he should smile on those, who lay the ax to the root, the constitution, and would by one fatal blow fell those admired branches, his title and his people's liberties. Stir up no strife in your public preaching, nor teach your parish to abhor an inhabitant of it for praying in a barn. Never persecute for religion's sake. Never oppress conscience. Never discountenance piety in other communities, lest men should think you not a minister of religion, but a tool of a party. Never condemn denominations, in the gross, nor impute principles and practices to them, which they abhor. Sow no jealousies and discords in families. Cultivate the general principles of christianity more than the peculiarities of your own party, and the rights of all mankind rather than the ritual of a very inconsiderable part of them.

You are the minister of a religion famous for its morality. Do nothing to weaken this evidence of its divinity.

Avoid all gross vices, drunkenness, adultery, lying, blasphemy, sabbath breaking. It is not enough for you to abstain from swearing and lying, you must not take the Lord's name in vain, nor allow yourself to prevaricate. Abstain from what Scripture calls *filthiness of spirit*, pride, levity, hypocrisy, avarice, discontent, distrust, mental immoralities. Practise all the moral duties of both tables, and let your flock see as well as hear your doctrine. Have no fellowship with those unfruitful works of darkness, gaming, horse-racing, frequenting taverns and ale-houses, play-houses, opera-houses, balls, assemblies, masquerades; avoid also hunting, shooting, dangling at the heels of Sir Robert, cringing at the levee of my lord, and fetching and carrying for my lady, of all which, whatever may be said for secular men, not one can be proper for you. The minister of Christ must at least appear to be a man of delicate and refined moral virtue.

You are a minister of a revealed religion. Study the Holy Scriptures, distinguish the doctrines of revelation from the discoveries of philosophers; the precepts of Christ from the prudential saws of Epictetus; the doctrines and laws of his kingdom from human creeds and worldly maxims; and do not imagine that classics and mathematics, novels and plays, contain a body of christian divinity.

Never turn the sacred truths of revelation into ridicule, nor call *being born again, fearing the Lord, praying by the spirit*, the cant of a party. The phraseology of scripture may have been misunderstood; but you should not discard both comment and text; you have adopted the book, and you ought to explain its meaning. Avail yourself of all opportunities of disseminating Scripture knowledge. Catechize the children, and the poor in your parish. Carry religion home to their bosoms. Lay aside the self-important haughtiness of a priest, and put on the meek and humble temper of your master. Go into the cottages of the poor. Encourage their meeting together to pray and to read the Holy Scriptures. Teach them to set up family worship, to perform a course of domestic devotion, and, above all things, never countenance the profanation of the Lord's day, but teach them to reverence and improve it.

You are, Sir, a minister in a rich community. Your country gives you good wages, and they expect at least some work. Employ your emoluments to better purposes than those of dress and equipage, Sunday visits, midnight revels, assemblies, simoniacal contracts, and such like. Detest the miserable disposition of hoarding wealth, and dread being possessed with the rage of rising to preferment. Remember, all church emoluments are fiduciary, and they lapse into the public hand, when the services for which they were granted, are not performed. Flatter the vices of no patron; but with a modest boldness reprove

them. Dare to be upright. Despise the shame of singularity. Touch no sinecures. Renounce needless pluralities. Do not plead for non-residence, and, if you must have a curate, let him share both work and wages.—It would be tedious to you, were I to go through the duties that are annexed to all offices from the curate up to the metropolitan of all England, and I will only beg your patience, while I add, in general, avoid the six vices, that disgrace too many of your order. Destroy the prejudices of deists and infidels—allow, at least, the probability of some defection—and adopt the course prescribed by the oracles of God.

The principal vices that disgrace the priesthood are: 1. *Ignorance* of a body of christian divinity. 2. *Perjury*, IF they subscribe upon oath their belief of propositions, which they have either not examined, or do not believe. 3. *Ambition*, expressed in a haughty reserve in private life, a vain and pompous parade in public, a pedantic affectation of wisdom of words in their public preaching, by which they sacrifice the edification of a whole congregation to the silly vanity of shining as men of genius. 4. Insatiable *avarice*, ten thousand times more tenacious of a four-penny Easter offering than of all the ten commandments. 5. *Time-serving*, always pursuing those measures which serve their own interest, surrendering to it philosophy and divinity, the interest of their country, and the honour of their God. 6. *Hypocrisy*, acting a part, recommending christianity by office, and establishing paganism by inclination, at

church in masquerade, and at a play in their native character. Such priests as these turn the heavenly manna into poison. They give the enemies of religion cause to blaspheme, they are the ridicule of Atheists, and the reasons of Deism! Be it your holy ambition, Sir, to wipe off the foul prejudices that defile the face of a weeping reformed church. Your community is suspected of symbolizing with popery, for Parpalio the pope's nuncio offered in the pope's name to confirm yonr service book. All reformed divines own, the distinguishing characters of that apostate church are *three*, superstition, tyranny, and immorality. Are there no evidences of your posessing these gloomy marks of antichristianism? Are your morals uncorrupt? Do you place no religion in habits, places, words, and forms? Have you resigned the unrighteous dominion over conscience, that in less inquisitive times your order unjustly acquired? Have you like other penitents joined restitution to repentance? Have you expelled no students for praying and reading the scriptures? denied ordination to no candidates on account of their holding the doctrines of your own articles? suspended and persecuted no clergymen for preaching more zealously than yourselves? Have you awed none into silence, who would speak if they dare? What said you to your petitioning colleagues? and what to the dissenting clergy, whom you flatter, and soothe, and call brethren in Christ? Are they freed from oaths, and subscriptions, and penal laws? Christian liberty!

thou favourite offspring of heaven! thou first born of christianity! I saw the wise and pious servants of God nourish thee in their houses, and cherish thee in their bosoms! I saw them lead thee into public view; all good men hailed thee! the generous British Commons caressed and praised thee, and led thee into an upper house, and there····there didst thou expire in the holy laps of spiritual Lords!····Allow, it is not impossible, it is not improbable, it is very likely, that MAY have happened in christianity, which has happened in law; multifarious statutes have obscured plain common law. Changing the term law for divinity, I will recite the words of one of the chief ornaments of that profession. The christian religion has fared like all other venerable edifices of antiquity, which rash and unexperienced workmen have ventured to new dress and refine with all the rage of modern improvement; hence frequently its symmetry has been destroyed, its proportions distorted, and its MAJESTIC SIMPLICITY exchanged for specious embellishments, and fantastic novelties. For, to say the truth, all niceties and intricacies owe their original not to Scripture divinity, but to additions and innovations, often on a sudden penned by men, who had none, or very little judgment in divinity····In fine, Sir, feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood—covet no man's silver, or gold, or apparel—warn every one night and day with tears—serve the Lord with all humility of mind—keep back nothing that is profitable to us—teach us publicly, and from

house to house—testify to Jews and Greeks neither worldly politics, nor human inventions, but repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ—watch in all things—do the work of an evangelist—make full proof of your ministry—give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine—meditate upon these things—GIVE THYSELF WHOLLY TO THEM. Do these things, and then, when you are become venerably hoary in the best of services, finish your course with joy—take Britain and her colonies, protestantism and popery, Canada and China, your own church and other reformed churches, heaven and earth, to record that you are pure from the blood of all men—Quit the world like your divine master, and ascend to heaven, you blessing us, and we admiring you.

But if on the contrary, neglecting all the duties of your office, and practising all the vices that ever provoked the patience of God and man—If you enter the church by that door, by which Ananias was turned out, professing to be moved by the spirit of God, while you are actuated only by ambition or avarice—If so far from coming up to the spirit of those qualifications, which are required to ordination, you fall short of the very letter, either in learning, morality, or knowledge of theology—If you subscribe thirty nine articles, three creeds, the genuine and the apocryphal Scriptures, the books of prayer, ordination, and homilies, and swear canonical obedience to one hundred and forty one canons, without having read, examined, and

believed the whole—If you take the oath of supremacy, and hold, that the church hath legislative power—If you abjure popery upon oath, and yet hold the principal articles that support it—If you swear allegiance to his Majesty, and teach anti-revolutional principles—If you obtain preferment by simony direct or indirect—If you take charge of 2000 souls, and never speak to 1900 of them —If you hold contradictory doctrines while you profess uniformity—If you have a catechism, and never teach it—If you neglect your duty to hunt after preferment—If you enjoy the emoluments of a spiritual office in person, and do the service of it by proxy—If you hate reformation, and depreciate and persecute those who would reform you—If you misrepresent peaceable subjects, taxing them with heresy, schism, and republicanism, and strive to render their loyalty to the crown, and their love to the constitution doubtful—If you prophane Sabbaths, and ordinances of divine appointment—If all your study is to make a fair shew in the flesh—If you mind only earthly things, your god being your belly, and glorying in your shame —and vainly imagine to cover all these crimes by observing a Good-Friday, and so to gull mankind into a persuasion of your sapience and sanctity—Know of a truth—the time may come, when your civil governors may see it as necessary to reform your reformation as their ancestors did to reform the religion of your predecessors—till then, although the religion of pious spectators will not suffer them to hurt a hair of your head, yet the same

religion will oblige them to say of you—This evil man talks of light, while his feet are stumbling on dark mountains—his country and the small remains of his own conscience, the canons of his church and the laws of the state, the liberalities of his prince and the tears of his brethren—the ashes of Burnets and Hoadlys and Lardners, the best judgments of heaven on degenerate priests and incorrigible nations, all call him to his duty, and warn him of the danger of falling into the hands of an angry God—if he will not hear, our souls shall weep in secret places for his ignorance and pride!

FINIS.

A

PLAN

OF

LECTURES

ON THE

PRINCIPLES

OF

NONCONFORMITY:

FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF

CATECHUMENS.

Whatever moderation or charity we may owe to mens' persons, we owe none at all to their errors, and to that frame which is built on, and supported by them.

Bishop BURNET.

[THE SIXTH EDITION PRINTED 1797.]

EASTERN ASSOCIATION.

HARLOW, ESSEX, *June* 18th, 1778.

This Syllabus, entitled, A PLAN OF LECTURES ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NONCONFORMITY, *drawn up by our brother Robinson, has been read and approved by us at this association, and we hereby recommend it to our sister churches.*

Signed by order of all, by

MORGAN JONES, *Moderator.*

PREFACE.

THERE are three sorts of persons, who absent themselves from the episcopal places of worship established by public authority in England; commonly, though improperly denominated THE *Church* OF *England.* The first sort consists of irreligious persons, who renounce *all public worship.* The second is composed of such as approve of what they suppose the doctrine, discipline, and constitution of the episcopal church; but disapprove of the *men,* who officiate in it; either on account of their doctrine or practice, or both, which they think are incompatible with the constitution of it. We are not addressing ourselves to either of these classes; to their own master they stand or fall. The third sort do not dissent from the officers and members of the established church merely, (to them they wish every felicity,) but they disapprove of the CONSTITUTION ITSELF, and object against all the principles that support it. These are, strictly speaking, the only *Nonconformists* or *protestant dissenters* in this kingdom; they consist of the various denominations of Baptists—Independents—Presbyterians—and the people called

Quakers; and all their congregations together in England and Wales amount to near two thousand; so that they bear about the proportion of a fifth to the episcopal church.

Whatever may be the worth of those arguments, by which the religion of these dissenters is governed, whether they be sophistical, probable, or demonstrative, it is beyond a doubt, they have operated, and they continue to operate, a firm, resolute attachment to nonconformity; and it must needs be worth while to propose them in all their fair extent to the inquisitive youth in our communities, for whom our first wish is christianity, our second nonconformity. We have no secrets in our religion; and although the rigour of times hath formerly obliged us to teach it in corners, yet the truths taught merit the attention of all mankind. Many of our brethren have lamented the inattention of our youth to dissenting principles, and they attribute it to one or other of the three following causes. 1. It is usual to impute the virtuous moderation of the state to the episcopal church, and to account a dissent from such a mild church less necessary now than formerly. The truth is, what the church was at first that it still continues. It retains the same articles, the same ceremonies, the same courts, officers, principles, and canons, that it had all the time of its persecuting, and it refuses to repeal any of them. The state has restrained the operation of the ecclesiastical system on dissenters; but the system itself is the same. The state tolerates; but the church does not. Our youth should distinguish this.

2. Nonconformity is unfashionable, and in some places through various causes, contemptible; and fashion is law to too many young people. 3. Many pious ministers, all intent on inculcating the necessity of being saved from sin and punishment through faith in Christ, omit these peculiar principles of dissent. We highly commend their zeal; but, as all their labours proceed on supposition of the truth of these principles, we presume, they ought diligently to examine and inculcate them. If our ministers neglect to teach these true grounds of christian action, they have no right to expect of their people any other than blind obedience or open apostacy.

There are many ministers among us, who love work, and are indifferent about wages; who are industrious to disseminate religious principles in season and out of season; whose highest happiness is in the increase of the kingdom of our redeemer. These worthy disinterested servants of Christ are too often confined in regard to books, time, circumstances, and so on: to will is present with them, but how to perform that which they wish, they find not. To them we humbly present the following analysis, hoping it may facilitate their dissemination of their own principles among the youth in their assemblies.

We shall have supposed the good minister to have divided his congregation into three general parts. The first is the *church*, properly so called. The second *little children* to be catechized; and the third, for whose instruction this analysis is inten-

ded, CATECHUMENS, consisting of persons waiting to be admitted to church-fellowship, or of any others, who may chuse to be informed.

The primitive church was composed of persons professing faith and repentance. Where this profession was sincere it was the issue of cool deliberate examination, which necessarily preceded it. While the extraordinary influences of the holy spirit continued during the first age of the church, conversion was usually quick, and people in very short spaces were delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear son. After the cessation of extraordinary gifts, primitive christian ministers used an ordinary method of instruction. Such ignorant people as desired to join christian churches were formed into societies, regularly instructed by the ministers; and, at a proper state, brought forward to church fellowship. These were called *Catechumens;* and the revival of this state is previously necessary to the use of the following lectures. These are a kind of church-schools, more solemn than private conversation, and not subject to the laws of public worship. Here the pastor may simplify and familiarize a thousand topicks inadmissible to the pulpit, which yet all belong to his office; for he is the professor of divinity in his own congregation, and the giving of lectures on nonconformity is one branch of his office.

I shall suppose the pastor, then, to give public notice some time in each September that he shall give a course of lectures on nonconformity in

the ensuing winter—that the first lecture will begin at six in the evening of the second Wednesday in October—that the second will be that day fortnight; and so on, once a fortnight; and, consequently, that the whole course, consisting of twelve lectures, will be finished about the middle of March —That all who choose to attend shall be admitted on giving in their names to the minister—and that timely notice shall be given of such a lecture-room as will contain the company. What small expences occur, for firing, candles, servants, and so on, may be easily discharged by a proportionable subscription.

It would be impertinent to pretend to expatiate on the utility of such a service; and more so to offer the following sketch as a perfect invariable model of it. We only mean to convey a clear notion of what we aim at in these lectures. Most of our pastors are far superior to the want of such helps; and, if no junior have any occasion for them, we flatter ourselves they may not be unacceptable to such of our private youth as wish to trace the subject, and have no tutor to guide them. Each of these Analyses of lectures consist of a given number of notes. Each note contains one or more distinct ideas, and each idea is sufficient to form a period; the whole constituting a lecture. We have made half history, and half doctrine. They elucidate each other, and nonconformity includes both. We shall subjoin an example, at the end, of the manner of turning these notes into discourses.

PREFACE,

TO THE

FIFTH EDITION.

THIS little piece was written, without any malevolent design, about three years ago, merely for the use of a few associated churches, and, by their desire, to avoid the trouble of transcribing, it was printed; but it was not then *published*, nor was it intended to be published afterwards, because it was known to contain some disagreeable truths, which are at all times a censure, and therefore always an offence to some people, and it was thought needless to offend where there was no hope to reform.

By some means, unknown to me, the book fell into the hands of a certain noble peer, who thought proper to mention it in a debate in the house of lords, and, the dissenters bill being just then depending in parliament, much was said about it also in the house of commons. These accidents, and not any inclination of mine, published this book to the world.

During the sale of four editions I took no notice of any thing that was said about it, and my si-

lence proceeded from a consciousness that nothing was further from my natural disposition, nothing more opposite to my religious principles, nothing more contrary to my whole conduct through life than rancorous bigotry in matters of religion, and I thought I had been so careful in writing the book to distinguish between *men* and *things*, that nothing but wilful ignorance could impute such a disposition to me.

At length I judge it necessary to say a few words to such as think this little insignificant pamphlet of consequence enough to deserve their censure, and I divide these gentlemen into two classes.

The first consists of those, who have incorporated their own passions into the christian religion, who call ignorance solidity, indifference candour, censoriousness and ill temper zeal for truth, pride of priesthood, propriety of character, or, to use the language of a prophet, *who are wise* enough *in their own eyes, and prudent* enough *in their own sight to call evil good, and good evil.*

To *Candidus*, and *Veritas*, and *Niger*, and *Mendax*, and all the rest of this order, I owe no service, write no anwers, and have nothing to say, except that as I never intended to offend them, so I never meant to please them, and as I never printed a line for their use, so I never intend to review one.

To the other class I turn with the most profound esteem, and, as they have somehow mistaken my meaning, I beg leave with all possible deference to

say a few words concerning the *subject*, of which this book treats, and the *manner*, in which it is here treated.

The subject of the book is *the constitution of a christian church.* It is affirmed, that Christ is the head, believers the members, scripture bishops and deacons the only officers, scripture the law, and pure and undefiled religion the sole object of this community. How can this subject be offensive to any disinterested christian?

The manner of treating it is by a statement of historical facts, which never were, nor ever can be denied. Indeed these facts might have been narrated with an accompanyment of soft words, that would have rendered them less glaring; but then this would have been a history, and not what it is now, an analysis, an index of history, or a kind of chapter of contents. The translators of the bible have thought fit to put at the head of each chapter a brief sketch of its contents, and were these contents published alone they would appear full as uncourtly as this syllabus. The truth is, some of us are ugly fellows, and no style of painting can reconcile us to our own faces.

Where the truth of facts cannot be denied, and where the manner of stating them is a matter of comparative indifference, there will remain only one method of getting rid of them, that is, by pretending to know the *motives* of the narrator, and by attributing to him the worst that can be imagined. This is an expeditious method, and fitted to all men, even to such as have neither abilities

nor virtue to qualify them for any other service. This may be done without reading and without reasoning; it may be done while we make good cheer, smoke our pipes, or job in the stocks; though it cannot be done without extreme folly by those, whose cause is pleaded by the books they censure.

Although the truth of a history does not at all depend on the motive of an historian, nor the strength of an argument on the spirit of him who urges it, and although *my* motives in writing this piece are too insignificant to merit the attention of any man, yet I will strain a point, and honestly declare, as far as I know my heart, and in the sight of him who searcheth it, what induced me to compile this little piece. My tale shall be plain and artless, suffice it at present, that it is true.

I have long observed, and much enjoyed, the felicity of being a Briton. Great Britain is the first country in the world, and the God of nature hath stored it with every thing that can make its inhabitants happy. Its insular situation, the extent and figure of its coasts, the islands that surround it, its springs, waters, and navigable rivers, its timbers, fruits, herbs, corn, and all other productions of its luxuriant soil, its immense treasures of earths, salts, fossils, minerals, stone, marble, and fuel; its animals, wild and tame, flocks, herds, hives, daries, poultry, fisheries, decoys, the stately horse, and the hardy ass, all ministering to the subsistence and pleasure of its inhabitants, the stature, genius, fecundity and longevity of its natives, the temperature of its climate, in one word, the natural advan-

tages of Great Britain render it, upon the whole, the most beautiful and desirable country in the world. The whole is a rich present, which the bounty of providence has bestowed upon us.

I have observed, with the utmost pleasure, the art and industry of my countrymen assisting nature. Agriculture, architecture, navigation, commerce, literature, arts, sciences, in endless varieties, give grace and elegance to this lovely island. Who can behold cities full of inhabitants, artists and manufacturers employed in thousands, shops thronged with customers, warehouses full of stores and goods, markets and fairs exposing plenty at our doors, roads, rivers, fields, villages, mines, and sea-ports all alive; I ask, who can behold all these in his own native spot, and not exclaim, may my country flourish to the end of time!

I have received an addition to my pleasure, by understanding, that all the natural and artificial advantages of Great Britain are capable of great improvement, and I have been happy to see every year new advances towards national perfection. The forming new societies for improvement, the invention of new machines for facilitating labour, the inclosing of wastes, the making of roads, securing rivers, cutting canals, draining fens, planting timber, importing foreign arts, books, grains, grasses, animals, all these, and a thousand other amendments and inventions, convince us that we are not yet arrived at our zenith, and open a future prospect of rational pleasure and joy.

My pleasure has been increased, by observing the happy constitution of our government. Our mixed monarchy contains all the excellencies, and provides against the evils of the three sorts of government, of which it is compounded. It is, indeed, a human composition, and therefore, like every other human production, imperfect, and liable to degenerate. Its excellence does not lie in any one of its component parts, but in a nice union of the three, which union is then perfect, when it prevents any one from preponderating, and rendering the other two subservient to itself. Whatever may be my private opinion concerning the present inclination of the balance, I have said nothing on the subject in this book.

My pleasure has risen higher still, by observing what innumerable benefits flow from both the justice and the generosity of this happy kingdom. We have a system of law universally administered, that holds the life, liberty, and property of every individual sacred, and a long train of well-contrived and effective charities, consisting of schools, hospitals, public provisions for all the wants and the maladies, to which mankind in the several stages of life are exposed. To crown all, the religion of our country is christianity, the last best gift of God to man. All these advantages put together, afford an abundance of felicity, sufficient to satiate the most benevolent soul; and, whether it be ignorance or knowledge, virtue or vice, religion or enthusiasm, certain I am, observing these advantages of the land of my nativity

has given me inexpressible pleasure, and has made Britain appear a paradise to me. Who that loves his species can help forming the most ardent wishes for the prosperity of this country? Who can help saying, *Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee!*

Whoever indulges a pleasure arising from these considerations, will find it interrupted by a universal complaint of the general infidelity and profligacy of the inhabitants of this happy clime. It is not a murmur issuing from the cell of a rigid monk, or an explosion of the fierce rage of an enthusiast; it is the sad and sober remonstrance of all the wisest and best men in the kingdom, and it is supported by proofs, alas! too glaring and notorious.

After we have made as many concessions to the frailty of human nature as the tenderest parent would make to the follies of his children, and after we have given all the merit, that an excess of candour can desire, to the virtues of our countrymen, we are obliged to confess, that we abound with impiety and immorality. Atheism, deism, infidelity in a thousand forms, drunkenness, debauchery, swearing, profanation of the Lord's day, variegated frauds, and boundless luxury in ten thousand shapes, disgrace this country; and these are not confined to the low and illiterate, but they profane all ranks and degrees among us. Examine a county election, observe a city feast, or a country wake, walk through public places of business or pleasure, attend the courts of justice and listen to the causes trying there, peep into hospitals and

jails, see the navy, and the army, in a word, behold the whole body politick, and behold, in the language of a prophet, *a sinful nation, a people ladenwith iniquity, a seed of evil doers; forsaking the Lord, and provoking the holy one of Israel to anger.*

Two things have here made forcible impressions on my mind: first, it is certain, that christianity is a religion so good in itself, so admirably adapted to the wants and just wishes of mankind, so plain to the meanest capacity, and so clear and irresistible in its evidences of divinity, that it is not capable of any improvement; it is, like all the other works of God, *perfect and entire, and wanting nothing, commending itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Yet, secondly, it is equally clear, that the precepts of this religion are not practised by the bulk of us, that its beauty is not seen, and that its evidences make few or no impressions on our minds. A question, then, naturally arises: what is the cause of this universal darkness amidst such a profusion of light?

It does not proceed from a scarcity of teachers. Our schools have masters, our universities tutors, our nobility domestic chaplains, our parishes priests, our inns of court, our regiments, ships, hospitals, and jails, have preachers, chaplains, or ordinaries, all devoted from their earliest youth to the service of religion; all educated with a view to diffuse the knowledge of christianity; all freed from secular employments, and professing to teach and exemplify the principles and practices of Jesus Christ.

It does not proceed from a scarcity of provision for our instructors; for beside the immense salaries paid to some, and the abundance of small dues to all, the whole produce of the ground, except in a few cases, is every tenth year allotted them. Jews and christians, papists and protestants, conformists and nonconformists pay their share.

It is impossible, on the one hand, to deny the wickedness of this nation; for, we are daily told, that the present calamitous war, the ruin of trade, the increase of taxes, the many, very many ills, under which we groan, are all punishments of our sins; hence general fasts, and fast sermons, and in every pulpit catalogues of crimes to be repented of, and forborn. On the other hand, it is impossible to deny, that national wickedness is the effect of a cause, and that there is a great fault somewhere.

I ventured to suppose, that this fault lay, not in the clergy, but in the constitution of that church, which they are retained to support. I examined the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ on the mount, and compared them with the thirty-nine articles of faith; I read the discourses delivered by Jesus Christ at the ordination of his twelve apostles and seventy disciples, and, having done justice to the subject by leaving out the extraordinary, and retaining only the ordinary parts, I compared this remainder with the book of consecration, and ordering of priests and deacons; and so very scrupulous was I in making this contrast, that I pro-

cured of a particular friend that very *edition* of the book to which the clergy subscribe, and which is so extremely scarce, that few in the kingdom have seen it.* I compared the other discourses of Christ and his Apostles with the two books of homilies. I collected the Lord's prayer, and the other prayers of scripture together, and compared them with the liturgy. I compared the rules of ecclesiastical action laid down in the new testament with the canons of the church, the temper and disposition of Christ with the temper and spirit of these laws. In one word, I compared the gospel according to the four evangelists, with the gospel according to the episcopal reformers, and I found, or thought I found, an admirable fitness in the first to answer the ends of Christ's coming into the world, that is, to make men wise and good, and consequently an unfitness in the last.

My conviction increased, by comparing the history of the gospel, according to the four evangelists, as recorded in the acts of the apostles, with the history of the gospel according to Cranmer, as recorded in all our historians; and, from the whole, I could not help concluding, that were christianity proposed now to Britons as it was then to Greeks and Romans, it would produce as good effects, because we have as much good sense as they, and it would produce no commotions and allowed persecutions, because we have better no-

* See the thirty-sixth article of religion, intitled, *Of consecration of bishops and ministers.*

tions of civil and religious liberty than they had. I verily believe it is not real, but disguised christianity, that is the object of the suspicion, doubt, and ridicule of infidels.

Whenever we talk of reformation, though we detest a spirit of persecution, and propose no means but reason, argument, and example, yet some men's heads instantly swarm with notions of anarchy, confusions, convulsions of church and state, skirmishes and battles, and wounds and prisons, and fire and blood. They take fright, talk wildly, and, with artifice truly sophistical, set up a cry, treason, sedition, republicanism, error, heresy, schism, all gushing out, and threatening to overflow, and carry away monarchy, universities, literature, candour, indulgence, toleration, and religion, and yet God knows there is not one word of *truth* in all this.

Let us suppose a case. I imagine some idle retired man, when the parish officers call for a rate, to cast his eyes on their accounts, and to perceive 20 shillings charged for washing the priest's surplice four times in the year. Suppose him to say to them, gentlemen, there are ten thousand parishes in England; at this rate we pay ten thousand pounds annually for washing surplices, and there are many collegiate churches and chapels, many cathedrals and other chapels belonging to hospitals, schools, and so on, which must be laid at least at a third part of the above sum. Surplice-washing, then, costs the nation above thirteen thousand a year. I say nothing of three

pounds for a new one every seven years: but I do think the whole money might be better employed, and the religion of Jesus Christ suffer no damage. Suppose this calculator a bigot or a madman, it is shocking to suppose him on this account an enemy to candour or learning, religion or government.

A certain dignitary of the episcopal church, for whom I shall always entertain the highest regard, once did me the honour to ask me, on supposition he and I had been appointed by conformists and nonconformists to reconcile differences, and to form a bond of union to incorporate the two bodies into one, what alterations in the present constitution I would wish, and what terms I would propose. I replied, I would beg leave, before I entered on any particulars, to settle one preliminary article with him, that was the doctrine of *imposition*. To this he instantly acceded, as indeed every man of sense must, for, if any thing in nature be clear, this is, one christian ought not to impose his religious principles and modes of worship on another. Each ought to leave another in possession of the same liberty of thinking and acting, which he himself enjoys. This preliminary settled, I took the liberty to say, I have nothing more to add, for by this one article, the whole is effected, and effected, O marvellous! in an alcove in a garden, without blood, or blows, or angry words.

This just principle would operate to enfranchise every parish in Britain, for each congregation would choose its own minister, instead of supporting one imposed by a patron. Each minister

would form and adopt principles of his own, instead of subscribing a creed imposed on him by others. If people thought priests and prayer-books, and surplices and ceremonies necessary to religion, they would support them by their own methods, instead of obliging others to maintain a ritual, from which they derive no benefit. In a word, the whole nation would be put in possession of religious liberty, and instead of leaving religion to the care of a few, we should, probably, each examine the matter, and take care of himself, and this I should call virtue, if not christian piety.

The reverend prebendary of Winchester, who thought fit to animadvert on this book in a series of letters addressed to his lord bishop of London, acknowledges the want of some revision, and reformation, and in this he speaks the language of all considerate members of his community: but the subjects to be revised are the articles, and the liturgy, not the point, the great point, RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, on which all the controversy turns. We object against a *constitution*, and we are answered by encomiums on the *officers*, who administer it; a dignified clergyman could not say less, and a prudent bishop would not wish for more.

When I wrote this book, I had no other design than that of convincing the young people in our nonconformist churches of the nature, worth and importance of primitive christianity; being fully persuaded that revealed religion can never be proposed more wisely, or with more probability of success, than in the unadorned, simple manner, in

which it was proposed at first, and by which it subdued so many understandings to the obedience of faith. The objects of my contemplation were truth and error, christianity in the hand of Christ, and christianity in the hands of modern teachers; but as for rancour against the persons of any men, or any order of men, I always was, and am yet a happy stranger to the feeling. Captivity of conscience is the only object of my complaint, the liberation of it the sole object of my attention.

If I supposed some prelates would be punished at the last day, I supposed these prelates bloody persecutors; and do we not all affirm, that a persecutor is a criminal, and will be punished, whether it be a tradesman, a justice of peace, or a prelate?

It would be endless to answer quibbles upon words. It is a fact, that the preface, the close of the sixth lecture, and, in brief, the whole book distinguishes PERSONS from THINGS, agreeably to the quotation from bishop Burnet in the title page; and, it is equally true, that if I had the whole episcopal church, yea the whole papal community as much at my disposal as the most absolute tyrant ever had his slaves, I would not deprive them by force of one article of faith, or one ceremony of worship; I would only oblige them to separate religion from civil and secular affairs, in order to make all mankind as free as Christ intended they should be. I would not model a church to serve a state; but I would establish a state on wise and virtuous principles, and leave a supernatural reli-

gion to support itself. If prophecies and miracles, if the goodness of the doctrine and the lives of the founders of christianity cannot maintain the credit of revelation, alas! what can pomp and power do? *If men believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded if one rose from the dead.*

LECTURE I.

The doctrine of free religious inquiry stated, explained, and vindicated.

INTRODUCTION.

DAVID entertained a just and beautiful idea of religion, when he called it *inquiring in Jehovah's temple*—THE phrase implies two things—1. A right of inquiry in the people—2. A sufficiency in revelation to answer inquiries.

STATED.

INQUIRY is interrogation—examination—search—disquisition—investigation.

RELIGIOUS inquiry is examination of all subjects that belong to religion—as—NATURE and worship of GOD—MORAL obligations of men—TRUTH of revelation in general—AND the meaning of each part of it.

FREE religious inquiry is examination uncontrolled by human authority—BY our own passions and prejudices—BY popular customs—FASHIONS—MAXIMS.

EXPLAINED.

The most free religious inquiry is necessarily limited by the nature of things—NATURE and revelation exhibit subjects to be examined—SOME subjects are beyond our capacities, and a search into them is vain—OTHERS are comprehensible without revelation—OR with it—AND others again are revealed in their truth; but not in their mode of existence.—INQUIRY, therefore, is then free, when it possesses a liberty of proceeding as far as the reason and fitness of things allow.

VINDICATED.

1. EVERY intelligent creature is capacitated for it—GOOD men are peculiarly fitted for it—THE highest inspiration does not exclude it—HEAVEN exhibits the noblest exercise of it.

2. IT is essential to religion.—CONSIDER the nature of God—MAN—VICE—VIRTUE—REVELATION written or preached—GRACES of a christian, as—FAITH—REPENTANCE—HUMILITY—ZEAL.

3. It is expressly commanded by Jesus Christ—HIS prophets—AND apostles.

4. IT injures no civil rights.—OBSERVE the three grand articles implied in it—THE sole dominion of Christ—THE right of private judgment—ENTIRE liberty of conscience allowed by an universal toleration.—NEITHER of these interferes with secular things—ALL ennoble society—AND enrich and aggrandize a nation.

ILLUSTRATED.

CONTRAST the countries where it is suppressed with those where it is cherished—THE times in our own country when it has been depressed with those in which it has been encouraged—THE meanness and misery of those, who do not claim it, with the dignity and felicity of those who do—IN prosperity—ADVERSITY—AFFLICTION—PERSECUTION—DEATH—JUDGMENT.

Finish—BY applauding the worship of our churches, consisting of free prayer—FREE and frequent preaching—FREE debate—FREE psalmody—FREE joining a church—FREE dismission—ALL tending to nourish free inquiry—WHICH human establishments—CUMBERSOME rituals—AND penal sanctions drop and depress.—PRAISE the liberal men of all denominations, who have claimed and exercised it in states—SCHOOLS—AND churches—AND have lost civil liberty—PROPERTY—AND life for doing so.

LECTURE II.

The History of the Reformation.

INTRODUCTION.

MOSES in the viii. of Deuteronomy furnisheth us with two general notions.—1. THE doctrine of providence.—2. THE benefits of investigating it. —THESE were properly addressed to a people just freed from despotism—AND they are so to us, whom the reformation hath placed in similar circumstances—WE are come out of Egypt—BUT not yet arrived at the promised land.

THE state of religion at the accession of Henry VIII. naturally excited prejudices in our ancestors against it—AS the claims and condition of the head of the church, the pope—THE doctrines preached —THE laws of church government—THE ceremonies of worship—THE pomp—POWER—TYRANNY —AND temper of prelates—THE lives of the clergy —IMMORALITIES of religious orders—IGNORANCE and misery of the populace, &c.

THE history of the corruption of natural religion —AND of that of the Jews—ALONG with prophecies of the new testament—STRENGTHENED those prejudices against the papal community.

SEVERAL events coincided—LITERATURE revived—PRINTING was invented.—FRANCIS I. Henry VIII. and Charles V. pursued measures, which emboldened inquirers—HENRY quarrelled with the Pope—UNIVERSITIES favoured him.

HENRY's reformation altered the *form* of popery —BUT did not remove the grand *principle* of it, human authority in matters of religion—THE act of supremacy lodged the same power in the crown, that had been vested in the pope.—IN virtue of this power the king exercised ecclesiastical legislation and jurisdiction—APPOINTED by commission articles of religious doctrine—AND practice for the nation—AND supported them by penal sanctions —REFORMATION went backward in the close of his reign.

THE reformers in the reign of Edward VI. retained the doctrine of royal supremacy—THEY availed themselves of his minority—AND youth— PUT out two service books—INTENDED a third— AND might have put out a thousand on the same principles—THEY sacrificed the rights of all the nation to a fancied prerogative of a boy.

AT Queen Mary's accession popery was restored—FOUR HUNDRED protestants burnt—OR murdered—MULTITUDES fled—THE greatest number settled at Francfort—AND worshipped God without the English service-book.—Dr. Cox disturbed their worship—CABALLED with the magistrates— GOT those banished, who had *purified* religion from popish ceremonies—INTRODUCED the English liturgy and government—AND was the cause of the separation.—CALVIN and others were applied to—THEY censured the book—AND the violence of those who imposed it.

QUEEN Elizabeth's reigning passion was love of despotism—HER means of obtaining it were full

of duplicity—TREACHERY—AND cruelty—SHE made religion an engine of government—AND framed the English episcopal corporation so as to serve her arbitrary plan of governing—SHE obtained an absolute supremacy—HER bishops acted under it—SHE imposed articles—CEREMONIES—OATHS—PENALTIES, &c.—AND laid the foundation of episcopal uniformity in the blood of the puritans with unpardonable cruelty.

Finish—BY contrasting the characters of her bishops with those of FOX—COVERDALE—KNOX—CARTWRIGHT—AND other puritans—AND compare the manner of framing the episcopal church with that of constituting primitive churches by the apostles.

LECTURE III.

A general view of Queen Elizabeth's church.

INTRODUCTION.

REVEALED religion always gloried in a public exposure.—MOSES published his mission in the most learned—AND inquisitive—COURT then in the world.—THE prophets did not preach in dark places of the earth—THEY reproached pagan priests for peeping and muttering in obscurity.—JESUS Christ taught no secrets—HE commanded his apostles to publish his gospel on the house-tops—AND they obeyed him strictly.—TRUTH gains by exposure—AND if silent acquiescence were essential to prelatical safety it would be a violent prejudice against it.—ONE knows not what to make of the inconsistency of this church—IT publishes laws—BOOKS—&c.—AND seems, to challenge examination—AND yet it publishes other laws—AND other books—TO prohibit examination.—WE shall go by the former—AND place it in several points of light to obtain a just notion of it.

I. VIEW.

THE system acquires no reputation from the *times* in which it was formed—NOR from the *persons*—WHO formed it.—NEITHER Harry—NOR Elizabeth—HAD any piety—NOR one sound notion of civil government.—THEY were only neces-

sary to the reformation as they were less tyrants than the pope.—STATESMEN sacrificed religion to save the nation.—PRELATES were chosen for secular purposes—AND all persons—AND events—WERE directed to crown uses. THERE was very little learning—LESS deliberate moderation—AND no philanthropy—IN any of them all.

II. VIEW.

PRELATICAL hierarchy is not *religion*—IT is no part of moral philosophy, which is natural religion—NOR of the plan of redemption, which is revealed religion—IT is a direct violation of both.—PEOPLE in the community may think themselves religious—AS the deformed think themselves handsome—OR they may be religious—AS trees may be accidentally fruitful in an unfriendly soil—BUT the constitution itself is not religion—NOR calculated to promote it—NOT faith—NOR repentance, &c.

III. VIEW.

THE hierarchy considered as a CORPORATION is unconstitutional—ITS creeds—AND canons—AND rules of government—ARE a kind of bye laws—WHICH are unconstitutional when they violate the first allowed principles of government.—CHARTERS—PATENTS—AND monopolies—flowing from regal prerogative—ARE so far illegal—AS they injure society at large.

IV. VIEW.

PRELACY as *a system of governing* is unsound at heart.—IN all good governments—THE people are the origin of power—BUT the people have no authority here.—THE parliament that authenticated the hierarchical system exceeded their powers—THE people could not commit—NOR did they commit the choice of a religion to them—AND had they elected them for that purpose—THEY could not constitutionally bind their successors—AND they might as well have stated our taxes to the end of the world—as our religion.—PRELACY has always thriven most under arbitrary princes—AND discovered one uniform invariable attachment to dominion over conscience.

V. VIEW.

AN established hierarchy is baneful to *learning*—ESPECIALLY sound critical religious literature.—A given sense of scripture—IMPOSED by oath—ON juniors—PRECLUDES free inquiry, the soul of learning—AND poisons education at the spring-head—ACCORDINGLY, the scriptures sink into disrepute.—DIVINITY is no science at universities.—CLASSICKS—AND mathematicks—ARE all in all.—THERE is nothing to find out in religion—THIRTY nine articles tell all.—THERE is nothing to improve—FOR to swear not to endeavour to alter—IS to give up the idea of improvement.—THERE is nothing to defend—THE sword does that—NO use of

reason—ARGUMENT—PERSUASION—FOR the people were all made christians at baptism.

VI. VIEW.

THE episcopal establishment may be viewed as falling in—or rather out—with the generous plan of redemption—TO be communicated by *preaching*. —THE plan was laid to make all men see the manifold wisdom of God—BY preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ—BUT this system drives some away from publick worship—FATIGUES others with tedious—unmeaning—ceremonies—LEAVES but a few minutes for preaching—EMPLOYS them but seldom—AND then devotes them to a rapid declamation—IN favour of a dry morality—A dream to amuse—OR a drug to stupify.

VII. VIEW.

CONSIDER episcopacy as it affects *property*.—CALCULATE the charge of introducing—SUPPORTING—ADORNING—EMPLOYING it.—IT is an enormous tax—IMPOSED on industry—TO empower a few individuals—TO create others like themselves—TO sign a few useless papers—TO loll in indolence—TO riot in luxury—AND to defeat among lords—WHAT liberal acts for religious liberty are supported by commons.

VIII. VIEW.

PRELACY hurts *morality*.—MORALITY is either supported by personal principles—BUT this system is formed for the destruction of principles—OR by imitation of bright examples—BUT alas! how few such have we ever heard of—AND how are prevarication—HYPOCRISY—FORMALITY—BIGOTRY, &c. propagated by it.

Finish—BY placing prelates—AND people—BEFORE the judge of the whole earth at the last day. REPRESENT the glorious redeemer exhibiting his faithful servants—WHOM prelacy ruined for claiming their natural—AND religious rights—AND saying to these holy tyrants—THESE had meat—drink—and habitations—BUT ye reduced them to hunger—thirst—and banishment.—I gave them cloathing—BUT ye stripped them naked.—THEY had health—AND liberty from me—SICKNESS—AND imprisonment from you.—DEPART!

LECTURE IV.

The History of Puritanism during the reign of James I.

JAMES I. was weak in his intellects—PROFANE in his life—DESPOTICAL in his government.—HE pretended to learning—AND religion—BUT was destitute of both—AND was an ignorant—CONTEMPTIBLE tyrant.—HE came bad out of Scotland—AND English bishops made him worse.—HE was the author of all the calamities of his son's reign—AND has been the scorn of every impartial writer since.

JAMES's bishops were fit tools for such a tyrant.—WHITGIFT was bad—BANCROFT worse—LAUD the worst of all.—THE less despotical were equally contemptible for countenancing their inhuman church-polity.—PRELACY naturally friendly to popery and tyranny.

PURITANS were of four sorts.—1. DOCTRINAL—zealously attached to Calvinism.—2. PRACTICAL—of severe morals.—3. DISCIPLINARIAN—aiming to make scripture the rule of reformation.—4. POLITICAL—endeavouring to abridge prerogative, and extend popular liberty.

THE *third* sort of Puritans were divided into Presbyterians—BROWNISTS—INDEPENDENTS—BAPTISTS, &c.—SOME had formed churches of their own—OTHERS hoped for a comprehension in the episcopal church—AND employed all peaceable—AND constitutional means of obtaining it.—ALL were persecuted for one—AND that the *unpardon-*

able sin in the eyes of a despot, denying that the king's *will* was a nation's *law*.

THE Hampton-court conference was a ridiculous farce—A compound of king-craft and priest-craft.———THE actors in it forgot nothing but their masks.——THE puritans would not be gulled by it—BUT continued to dissent—AND they were right.

THINGS were in a state favourable to the increase of arbitrary church power, when the convocation that made the present body of canons, met. —COURTIERS and prelates of the most despotical principles were the king's favourites.—THE parliament had just suffered him to pack a house of commons—THE see of Canterbury was vacant—THE way to it was by conducting court measures in convocation.—THE prelates played their parts so well that they made a code of episcopal church-law—CONSISTING of 141 canons—ALL tending to establish absolute dominion over conscience—AND to ruin all, who could not swear to a falshood—THAT is, that the episcopal corporation is a truly *apostolical* church—so perfect as to need no future revision.—THIS senseless cruel code of law was ratified by regal patent—NOT by parliament—and has been adjudged therefore to be binding on the episcopal clergy—BUT not on the rest of the nation.

THE king and the prelates more violent in posting to absolute monarchy than before—FOR this purpose they tried Calvinism at Dort—AND then introduced Arminianism — AND depraved the morals of the people by the book of sports—IN-

VENTED plots—AND then imposed oaths—OF allegiance—SUPREMACY—SUBSCRIPTION, &c.—INCREASED ecclesiastical commissions—AND exercised inquisitorial cruelty under them.

THE persecuted puritans fled to Holland—IRELAND—AND America.—THE parliament petitioned James against prelatical tyranny—AND for the puritans.—THEY saw popery—AND despotism—STRIDING apace over all the land.—JAMES is inflexible—HIS prelates worse than himself—THE puritans increase.—THE tyrant was supposed to be poisoned—EXPIRES.

Finish—BY observing what episcopacy can do, when it has a head to its heart—AND by distinguishing between the interest of *a* church—AND of *the* church—AND the personal interests of ambitious men, who govern it.—A time-serving prelate is an object of pity—AS well as blame—HE buys his honours too dear.

LECTURE V.

The Constitution—officers—worship—and ceremonies of the Episcopal church.

INTRODUCTION.

A Religious society formed on principles of revelation—HAS no other rule of action than the express word of God—NATURAL worship resembles philosophical experiments—BUT revealed worship requires positive institute.—It is not enough that a thing is not forbidden—IT must be commanded. —CHRISTIAN faith is belief of a divine— revealed—truth—AND christian worship is obedience to a divine—written command.—St. Paul went on this ground, when he argued from the *silence* of scripture. Heb. vii. 14.—AND when he affirmed the *perfection of revelation.* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

REVELATION gives Christ an exclusive right of legislation—GOOD men entire liberty of conscience —AND all men the right of private judgment.— THE episcopal church transferred all these rights to Harry and Elizabeth.—It put them in the place of God—AND all their successors in the condition of irrationals.—It admitted that dangerous first principle—HUMAN authority in religion—AND erected Anglican episcopacy—ON what had alone supported popery—AND paganism.

THIS church is constituted of the whole nation —OF all ages— OF both sexes—OF all principles— OF no principles— OF all practices—AND profes-

sions--GOOD—BAD—AND indifferent.—ITS laws are canons—SOME confirmed by parliament—OTHERS not—ALL enforced by penal sanctions.—ITS support is worldly riches—SAVED out of the shipwreck of that pirate—THE pope.—ITS supreme head is a king—OR a queen—LUTHERAN—PRESBYTERIAN—PRELATICAL—OR popish.—It has existed under all—AND served the views of each.

THE officers of this church are all unknown to scripture.—THE same head is both the legislative—AND executive power.—UNDER him by commission are archbishops—WHO superintend diocesan bishops—WHO have under them deans—WHO are over canons—AND prebendaries—RECTORS—VICARS—CURATES.—THE first create the last—AND the last swear obedience to the first.—PRELATES are lords of parliament—THEY have a sole power of ordination—CONFIRMATION—CONSECRATION—A secular power to issue out writs in their own names—TO hold courts of judicature—TO sentence without a jury—TO transact business relative to marriages—WILLS—ADMINISTRATIONS—AND for these purposes—THEY have courts—AND officers—CHANCELLORS—ARCHDEACONS—COMMISSARIES—VICARS general—OFFICIALS—SURROGATES—PROCTORS—REGISTERS—APPARITORS, &c.—To describe their names—POWER—EMPLOYMENTS, &c. would have puzzled the twelve inspired apostles.

THE public worship of the episcopal church is by a stated liturgy—A defective book in every point of view.—ITS authority entirely human—IT

is conducted partly by a priest—WHO reads—AND partly by the people—WHO make responses—PARTLY in a desk—PARTLY at the communion table, &c.—IN cathedrals it is chaunted.—IT is composed of genuine—AND apocryphal scriptures—CREEDS opposite to each other—PRAYERS of scripture—FATHERS—MASS-BOOK—POLITICAL maxims—AND state-designs.——INFANTS are questioned—BOYS are taught falshoods—AND afterward confirmed—BREAD and wine are consecrated—THE sick are absolved—SERVICES are said for the Stuarts—HERETICKS are execrated &c.——THERE are errors of every kind in it—LITERARY—PHILOSOPHICAL—PHILOLOGICAL—THEOLOGICAL—THE very scriptures are burlesqued by being turned into question and answer.——THE whole is unnecessary—and unwarrantable—AND the imposition of it despotical.

THE episcopal church claims a right of ordaining ceremonies—AND practices many—CONSECRATING places—BOWING to the east—AND at the name of Jesus—SPRINKLING infants—SIGNING with the sign of the cross—REQUIRING sponsors—AFFECTING great pomp—AND mystery at what they call the sacrament—KNEELING to receive it.—THE actors all venerate certain habits—AS lawn sleeves—SURPLICES.—GOWNS—CASSOCKS—HOODS—&c.—OBSERVING—beside Lord's days—ONE hundred and fifty holidays each year—CHRISTENING at the west end of their buildings—TAKING their sacrament at the east—READING in one place—PREACHING in another—DE-

CORATING with pictures — ORGANS — BELLS — PUTTING on a ring in marriage — &c. —— THE whole ritual is unordained by God — UNPROFITABLE in divine worship — EXPENSIVE — HETEROGENEOUS — AND hurtful to popular piety — BY employing the little time — AND capacities of the common people about trifles — GENERALLY rendered hateful to them by the slovenly manner in which they are performed. — WERE the ceremonies got decently through — THEY would be silly enough to take them for piety — WHICH now they hate for the sake of its pretended garb.

Finish — BY accounting for the quiet acquiescence of the bulk of the people in this kind of worship. —— OBSERVE — that many never go — THAT numbers, who do, are totally ignorant — THAT many are interested, being paid for attending — IN various methods — THAT many people — YEA priests — complain — groan — and go on. — THAT people, who never once thought of religious liberty, make very good conformists — THAT they who aspire at it are driven away. — THAT divine worship is a sort of system — MADE up of mental excellencies — AND expressed by cautious — commanded — obedience —— THAT it requires industry — LABOUR — EXAMINATION — to acquire these. — THAT most men love ease — AND prefer a quiet submission to what is — before a diligent search of what ought to be. — THAT, however, to hold communion on condition of putting out an eye — is a reproach — TO him who proposes — AND to him who yields to it. —— NONCONFORMITY then is justifiable. See 1 Samuel xi. 1 &c.

LECTURE VI.

History of the times of Charles I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE capital artifice of high-churchmen is to impute their own vices to others—AND to impute other people's excellencies to themselves.—EPISCOPACY has not varied from the day kings created it.—IT has always been a hireling state of servitude.—WHEN it serves prerogative it produces national calamities—AND then transfers the guilt to others.—WHEN the people force it not to disserve the cause of civil liberty—IT complains at first—AND at last boldly attributes beneficial consequences to itself.—IT generates infidelity and immorality—AND when learned and laborious writers rescue religion from both—IT publishes sixpenny annual sermons—AND a few trite essays—AND runs away with the whole applause.

CHARLES came to the crown under great disadvantages—HIS education had been perverted—HIS capacity was none of the best—HIS temper gloomy—HIS notions of government despotical—UXORIOUSNESS—AND favouritism—led him to fill up his measure.—HIS father left him weak statesmen—AND wicked churchmen—A council table—A star chamber—AND a high-commission-court—A discontented parliament—AND an oppressed people all divided into endless factions—WORK for a wise

prince in the hands of a weak one.—THIS was what James's king-craft came to!

LAUD—NEILE—MONTAGUE—MANWARING—SIBTHORPE—AND other such slavish tools of despotism—endeavoured by all means to render the king absolute—THEY persecuted the puritans—RESTRAINED the liberty of the press—ADVISED the king to reign without law—PALLIATED popery—ELEVATED arminianism—AND drove the nation to side with the puritans—IN order to stem a torrent of civil despotism.

CHARLES and LAUD revived the book of sports—SUPPRESSED lecturers—AND encouraged ignorance—AIMED to unite the episcopal and papal churches—IMPOSED a liturgy on the Scots.—PURITANS fled to New England.—THE English were oppressed with proclamations instead of laws.—THE Scotch were dragooned—THE Irish massacred.—THE prelates—AND the court clergy were the only persons not harrassed—THEY fattened on the vitals of their country.—THEY defeated the reformation—RUINED COMMERCE—DISSOLVED the constitution—AND obliged the parliament to suppress prelacy for the nation's safety—AND to take up arms against Charles the patron of prelacy and tyranny—TO secure the lives—LIBERTIES—AND properties—OF the whole British empire.

CHARLES had three favourite schemes—AND all his administration was directed towards the establishment of them.—1. RAISING the power of the crown above law.—2. EXTENDING episcopacy over all his dominions—AS that system of religion

which best served arbitrary power.—3. THE total suppression of puritanism—AS a system tending to excite free inquiry—HIGH notions of popular rights—HUMAN dignity—AND general freedom—AND so to produce what he called sedition.

REVIEW of episcopacy.—IT is a shrewd prejudice against it, that the most arbitrary of our princes have discovered the greatest fondness for it—AS if it served their designs better than any other system called religion.—WHILE it was a creature of the pope it promoted papal tyranny—WHEN the British crown adopted it, it increased despotism and tyranny.—IT must of necessity serve its creator, for it is only for the sake of service.—FROM its rise to its suppression it possessed but little learning—LESS moderation—NO notion of civil liberty—AND *piety* is out of the question.—IT has stood in its utmost splendor without any of them all—CONSEQUENTLY learning, liberty, humanity and piety are not essential component parts of it.—THE same principle, implicit obedience to superiors, that makes it do any thing right, will oblige it to do every thing wrong.—THEIR cant of no bishop no king is a bold—impudent falshood—FOR our monarch is independent on the being of episcopacy—INDEED, no king no bishop is true—FOR episcopacy is not upheld by argument—REASON—SCRIPTURE—FREE election of people—BUT it is supported by authority at a vast expence.—IT is neither of divine—NOR human right—BUT it is a human wrong suppressive of divine—AND human rights.

Finish—BY distinguishing persons from things —BISHOPS from episcopacy—AND shew that strictly speaking prelates are objects distinguishable from prelacy—SOME prelates like some christians have never entered into the spirit of their profession—AND as christianity is laudable—BUT some christians are execrable—so some prelates may be laudable—BUT all prelacy is execrable—FOR it is composed of secular pomp—AND civil power—IN matters of religion—WHICH belongs to neither.—COMMEND the ingenuousness of those prelates—WHO have execrated intolerance—APPLAUD those—WHO have acknowledged the defects of their constitution—AND blame their pusillanimity—FOR not daring to act on the very principles—WHICH they propagated. HENCE derive an argument against the constitution itself—IT cripples some—AND shackles all.

LECTURE VII.

The terms of communion—nomination of officers —and discipline of the episcopal church.

INTRODUCTION.

THE preface to the episcopal liturgy calls it *divine* service—AND quaintly adds—the first original was ordained by the ancient *Fathers*.—EVERY thing in this community has been blasphemously put to God's account.—THERE was the divine right of kings—THE divine right of bishops—THE divine right of tithes—AND now here is a *book* of divine right.—HOWEVER, like other divine things —IT may be examined—REASON—AND religion require it.

THE terms of admission to membership—AND the ministry—ARE calculated so as to render examination useless—OR dangerous.—INFANTS are admitted—IN publick—OR private—BY dipping —OR sprinkling—ANSWERING interrogatories by proxy.—PROXIES are even required for adults— WHO are admitted on their own profession of faith —MINISTERS are admitted by subscribing thirty-nine heterogeneous—ABSTRUSE—HUMAN articles —BY declaring that the books of ordination—AND common-prayer—ARE agreeable to the word of GOD—THAT the two books of homilies contain a godly—AND wholesome doctrine—AND by swearing such obeedience to a lord bishop as 141 ca-

nons require.—SOME of their divines say the articles are arminian—OTHERS say they are calvinistic.—SOME say they subscribe to the words —OTHERS say to the sense—SOME say to their own—AND others to that of the compilers—OTHERS again in no sense—THEY subscribe them as articles of peace—NOT of truth.—THE whole affair of subscription is a miserable scene of prevarication.

THE episcopal church imposes ministers on parishes without the people's consent—HENCE no emulation in the priests—NOR the least aspiration after freedom in the people—YET they call themselves clergy—THAT is—ministers chosen by lot. —THE king—OR queen—for the time being—CHOOSES all the bishops—ALL the deans in England—ALL the prebendaries—AND many rectors. —THE Lord Chancellor chooses many—THE Bishops choose the Welch deans—THE Archdeacons —MANY rectors—VICARS, &c.—NOBILITY—AND gentry—have right of patronage—AND all present without the consent of the people.—ALL this arrangement is for purposes of civil government—OR rather for purposes of the regal prerogative—AND it despoils priests—AND people alike of religious liberty.

THE discipline of this corporation is the most irregular—AND tyrannical—THAT can well be in this country.—NUMBERS of ministers—AND members—WHO disbelieve the doctrines of the creeds —AND practise all immoralities—LIVE quietly—YEA obtain the highest preferment in it.—SOME

of the most wicked are obliged to receive their sacrament as a qualification for office.—THIS corporation punishes in spiritual courts—TRUE inquisitions—WHERE lay chancellors are judges—FROM whose decrees there lies no appeal.—THE punishments are fines—IMPRISONMENTS—DEPRIVATIONS—PENANCES—COMMUTATIONS of penance—EXCOMMUNICATIONS—EVEN of those who were never of the community.—THE excommunicated are excluded from the public worship—CUT off from giving evidence—RECOVERING property by law—CHRISTIAN burial, &c.—ALL this cruel polity is varnished over with spirituality AND divinity.—IN the name of God—Amen—A spiritual Lord—BY divine providence——IN a spiritual court—PLAYS the devil—AND calls the bloody farce a divine service—EXACTLY as Christ foretold. John xvi. 2.

THERE have been seven attempts to reform this church—THE first was the Hampton-court conference in the reign of James I.—THE second in Charles I. time—BY Usher's reduction of episcopacy—THE third at the return of Charles II. in the Savoy conference—THE fourth in the same reign—under lord keeper Bridgman—THE fifth in the same reign—AND a sixth—A seventh under William III. —ALL these attempts proved abortive by the same means.—THE affair exactly resembled the council of Trent—PRELATES—WHO were parties—WERE judges in both.—WHITGIFT—LAUD—SHELDON—MORLEY—WARD—SPRAT—AND others like them—always did—AND always will—SACRIFICE

christianity to save episcopacy—AND create ten thousand infidels—RATHER than give up one useless ceremony.

Finish—BY enlarging on Baron Montesquieu's concession—"That the protestant religion is more "favourable to a spirit of LIBERTY than the catho-"lick."—Observe—THAT despotism is the desideratum of most princes.—THAT popery is highly fitted to serve their views. —THAT they have protected popery for this—AND not for religious reasons. —THAT they have persecuted nonconformists for their religious sentiments, merely because they supposed them to include something injurious to arbitrary power. —THAT an army of hireling priests is a very convenient machine of government.—That our own history too well shews what they can do—BY shewing what they have done—UNDER the Stuarts.—THAT—so much episcopacy in a state—so much despotism—is a certain truth. —THAT universal—EQUAL—liberty is incompatible with prelacy.— THAT the nonconformists' principles of government are those of the best statesmen.—THAT to inculcate them in the church is the best preservative of the state—AND that attempts to reform is allowing on the episcopalian side a great part of what we affirm.

LECTURE VIII.

The State of Religion during the Civil Wars, and the Protectorate.

CHARLES, chagrined at the unpliableness of his parliament, fled—AND resolved in council to pass no more bills—TO pawn the crown jewels for ready money—TO purchase arms and ammunition —TO employ the pope's nuncio to hire foreign troops to enslave his own subjects.—THIS obliged the parliament to secure magazines—TO provide for the national safety—TO get command of the navy—AND the militia—AND to form alliance with the Scotch.

THE nation petitioned parliament for redress of grievances—THE parliament the king—BUT he full of duplicity—AND inflexibility—DENIED—OR deceived them—in all—RAISED forces—PROVIDED arms—AND began a war.—THE parliament abolished episcopacy—RAISED an army—AND defended their rights.

THE parliament thought the civil magistracy might set up what religion they thought most conducive to the good of the state.—THEY, therefore, reformed universities—AND cathedrals—ENFORCED the Sabbath—SUPPRESSED publick diversions —ORDAINED fasts—AND religious exercises—AND a great reformation of manners followed.—THE king's army remarkably profane—THAT of the parliament very sober.—CHARLES published procla-

mations—THE puritan clergy refused to read them —AND the king's soldiers plundered them for their refusal. —THE episcopal clergy refused to obey parliament orders—AND they also were plundered in their turn—GOOD and bad were involved in the publick calamity.—THIS produced committees for scandalous ministers—PLUNDERED ministers— &c. —RESTRAINTS of the press, &c.

THE parliament called the assembly of divines— —TO reform the church—AND invited the Scots to assist them—THE Scots agreed on condition of their establishing presbyterian church government —AND for that purpose swearing to the solemn league and covenant—WHICH was accordingly subscribed by both houses—THE clergy—AND laity— AND imposed on most episcopalians—BUT not on some, who were supposed free from arbitrary principles.

THE assembly addressed—AND were approved by foreign churches—THEY ordained ministers— THE parliament nominated to livings—AND ejected their enemies from livings—AND universities.— THE assembly published a directory instead of the old liturgy—AND the parliament put down Christmas—AND other festivals—TRIED and executed Laud—AND tried various measures for accommodation with the king.

THE king was in arms for arbitrary power— THE cavaliers for the episcopal church—THE Scots for covenant uniformity—BUT Cromwell possessed the art of overpowering all by becoming the pa-

tron of all, who wished for civil and religious liberty —AND managed all with indefatigable address.

The unhappy Charles was an incorrigible tyrant—AND deserved to die—BUT they, who put him to death, had no constitutional right to do so. —NO religious party was the cause of his death— ALL remonstrated against it—AND he fell a sacrifice to military power—BY the hands of a few desperate officers—AND their dependents—WHO were of various religious denominations.

CROMWELL was an astonishing man—HIS capacity was uncommon—HIS address infinite—HIS courage undaunted—HIS principles of government just and liberal—HIS religion doubtful.—HE possessed all the qualifications of a chief magistrate —EXCEPT that of free popular election to govern. —HE was an uniform patron of religious liberty ——NECESSITY— NOT equity governed some of his actions against his principles.—SOME peculiar maxims rendered his conduct inconsistent.

CROMWELL and his army petition for toleration—QUARREL with the parliament—FORCIBLY dissolve it—ASSUME the government—CALL the little parliament—A council of officers make him protector — HE calls another parliament — DISSOLVES them—TOLERATES all except papists and royalists—KEEPS them under for civil reasons— MODELS parliaments — UNIVERSITIES—ARMY— NAVY—FOREIGN treaties—AND all branches of government so as to render *himself* necessary to all.—PROJECTS an union of all the reformed.— INTENDS to restore monarchy—AND unite it with

universal liberty—TO wear a CROWN—AND transmit it to his family—BUT death prevented the execution of his plan.

Finish—BY distinguishing first principles of government—FROM social contracts for the preservation of them—ORDINARY obedience to established courses of law—FROM extraordinary recourses to first principles, when social contracts are in danger of dissolution.

LECTURE IX.

A view of Presbyterian church-government.

RELIGIOUS tyranny subsists in various degrees—AS all civil tyrannies do.—POPERY is the consummation of it—AND presbyterianism a weak degree of it—BUT the latter has in it the essence of the former—AND differs from it only as a kept mistress differs from a street-walking prostitute—OR as a musquet differs from a cannon.

THE reformed church at Geneva was the parent of the other reformed churches—AND this rendered presbyterianism odious to monarchs—IT was supposed to be formed on republican principles—AND for the same reason it was always offensive to the people—AS it was supposed to be—AND really is—A kind of ecclesiastical aristocracy—EXCLUDING both the monarch—AND the people—AND placing church-government in the hands of a select few.

ALL church affairs in presbyterian governments are managed—IN some places by two—AND in others by three—ASSEMBLIES—THE first is a consistory—OR presbytery—within each congregation—THE second a synod—OR a provincial assembly—CONSISTING of deputies from the several consistories.—THE third is a general—OR national assembly—MADE up of deputies from the synods.—APPEALS lie from the consistory to the synod—AND from the synod to the general assembly—

WHOSE sentence is final.—JOHN KNOX established this in Scotland—THE Scots brought it into England—AND the long parliament established it here—IN lieu of episcopacy.—IT is equally intolerant with episcopacy—AND cannot stand without civil power.—IT is somewhat remarkable that popery in Canada—EPISCOPACY in England—AND presbyterianism in Scotland—ARE all three *established* religions in the dominions of the king of Great Britain.

VARIOUS reformed churches have adopted various forms of church-government—BUT all are reducible to three—SIMILAR to civil governments. POPERY—AND episcopacy—ARE absolute monarchies—PRESBYTERIANISM is aristocracy—AND some independent churches are democratical—BUT all adopt *one* grand error—PRODUCTIVE of *two* great evils—WHICH generate ten thousand more—ALL nefarious.

THE great and fountain error is the considering of *conscience* as a subject of *human* government.—THIS notion produces two great evils.—1. LEGISLATION—NOW all human *legislation* is oppressive to conscience—AND it is immaterial where this power is lodged—IT is tyranny any where.—2. ENFORCING laws made by Jesus Christ—BY *penal* sanctions.—IN popery—AND episcopacy—BOTH the legislative and executive power are lodged in the same person.—PRESBYTERIANISM is exactly like them—AND only swears the civil magistrate to do the worst part of the work.—FROM these two evils—MAKING laws for conscience—AND then

executiug them — OR — executing laws made by Jesus Christ by coercive measures—PROCEED confusion—AND every evil work.

To spread the faith—AND to extirpate hereticks —AND schismaticks—ARE only pretences—IN the mouths of popes—AND princes—THEY have secular views—AND have given innumerable evidences—THAT they know no heresy but patriotism—AND no orthodoxy but despotism—BUT it was not thus with Calvin—KNOX—CRANMER—AND other reformers—THEY were sincerely mad with intolerance—AND seriously possessed with the rage of converting by force—IT was pity they had not paused—AND thought oftener!

Finish—BY a retrospect.—Observe—THAT ecclesiastical history in the days of Christ—AND his apostles—IS an exhibition of every humane—AND generous sentiment.—THAT it has been since a scene of infinite woe.—THAT the papal apostacy lost the spirit of christianity—AND imbibed that of the devil.—THAT the reformers came smarting— —AND feeling their way out of that bad school.— THAT secular powers associated with them to renounce popery—AND to form an opposition against it.—THAT the word *toleration* was not then known —NOR any idea of it—adopted by those reformers. —THAT—in a word—they were commendable for going so far—AND that we should be unpardonable for going no further.—THAT one word of St. Paul is a better body of what they call church-polity—THAN all the ship-loads of laws—AND canons—THAT have been since made—THAT word is—STUDY TO BE QUIET.

LECTURE X.

State of Religion from the Restoration to the Revolution.

CHARLES II. was a polite—DISSIPATED—gentleman—OF humane principles—BUT of no religion.—WHEN the nation restored him, they aimed to realize Oliver's plan of monarchy and liberty in Charles—WHOSE inclination was good—AND his title unexceptionable.—ACCORDINGLY civil liberty was very much advanced in this reign—AND so would religious liberty—HAD not the revival of episcopacy defeated the design—BUT those old sinners, episcopalians, not become wise by affliction—FELL to their former practices again.—THEY soothed the king—AND first deceived—AND then destroyed the puritans.

CHARLES published a declaration for liberty of conscience—WHICH the parliament would have enacted—BUT the prelates acted the farce of a conference at the Savoy—TAXED the puritans with sham plots—RENDERED them suspected by government—AND by the basest arts got the act of uniformity passed—WHICH ejected above 2000 ministers.—THEN followed the conventicle act—THE Oxford act—UNDER all which CLARENDON—SHELDON—WARD—AND other bishops—IMPRISONED and murdered 8000—IMPOVERISHED and ruined thousands of families—DROVE multitudes into Holland—AND America—AND robbed them

of 12—or 14 millions of property.—THE king—AND the parliament—OFTEN endeavoured to give them liberty—BUT their designs were frustrated by the prelates and the clergy—WHO preached the *divine* right of kings—BISHOPS—AND tithes—PASSIVE obedience and non-resistance—AND invented new church holidays for the purpose of propagating their seditious doctrines—WHILE they overwhelmed the nation with impiety—AND immorality.—THE few scholars—AND good men of the party—HAD received their education from puritans in the time of the civil wars.

JAMES II. was an arbitrary governor—A determined papist—HE assumed a dispensing power—AND aimed to bring in popery—FOR which purpose he published two declarations of indulgence—IN order to engage the nonconformists on his side.—MANY of them refused an unconstitutional liberty—WHICH the parliament durst not enact for fear of popery—WHICH the king—AND the prelates had prepared too many to receive.—MANY prelates shewed more inclination to popery—THAN to nonconformity—AND continued their bloody measures of church-polity.

James and his bloody counsellor Jefferies brought the episcopal clergy into the most terrible dilemma—THEY had ever asserted absolute royal supremacy over conscience—AND now the supreme head of their protestant church was a furious papist—WHO erected an ecclesiastical commission—AND appointed some popish commissioners to reform

their church.—THE prelates had indefatigably taught for the last twenty years passive obedience —AND non-resistance—AND now, according to their own doctrine, neither parliament—CLERGY —NOR laity might resist the measures of this desperate tyrant.—AT length he persecuted some prelates—AND both the universities—VIOLATED corporation-charters—AND dissolved the contracts of society—AND many prelates justified him—ONLY seven ventured to address him—AND courted the nonconformists—AFFECTING to relent—AND protesting like mariners in a storm how good they would be when they got out of their distress.

THE nonconformists were courted by both the king—AND the people—THEY were powerful enough to turn the scale either way.—THEY sacrificed their just indignation against the cruel prelates to national safety—THREW their weight into the scale of liberty—AND went most heartily into the project of a revolution.—THE prince of Orange came by invitation—THE cowardly despot fled—THE house voted the throne vacant—BUT when it was debated whether to fill the throne with a regent or a king—THE latter was carried by only two votes—TWELVE or thirteen prelates voted for the former—AND only two for the latter—THEY pretended to abide firmly bound by oath to an abdicated tyrant—WHO had broken all his oaths to them. —THEY had preached him into these terrible circumstances—HAD taught that resistance was damnable—THE king's character indelible—THEIR lives and fortunes at his disposal—AND had considered

the whole nation as the property of a tyrant—INALIENABLE in his family—TO be transmitted from father to son—LIKE a herd of cattle to be fed—WORKED—OR butchered—AS their master pleased. —THEY called this the doctrine of the *episcopal church*—AND of Jesus Christ—AND kept up a faction on account of it through the two next reigns.

LECTURE XI.

A view of modern Nonconformity.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is a peculiar excellence of truth and virtue to become more lucid and demonstrative by exercise —HENCE the wisest of men said, The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.—NONCONFORMITY to human appointments in religion—is a course of this kind.—THERE are stronger arguments for it now than ever.—IT is grounded now on new—AND enlarged principles.—IT is supported by new additional arguments—ADORNED by many new examples—DIVESTED of its superfluities.—IT has been tried—AND found practicable—AND praiseworthy.—ITS enemies remain inflexible—AND episcopalians are incurable—SO that time has proved the fault lies in the *constitution* itself.——ITS principles have been realized in civil government —AND accredited by the benefits produced.—ITS evidence dawned at the reformation—AND has gradually brightened to demonstration—TO meridian day.

NUMBER.

The number of partizans in many cases prove nothing—AS in communities where the people can-

not—OR may not—think for themselves—BUT in our communities—WHERE no secular interest warps—AND where strong temptations attack—WHERE inquiry is free—AND men actually examine—NUMBERS are considerable.—THE present body consists of Baptists—GENERAL—AND particular.—INDEPENDENTS—PRESBYTERIANS—MORE strictly independents, who occupy such meeting-houses as were presbyterian formerly—THE people called Quakers.—THERE are in England and Wales about 1400 congregations of the three first denominations—THE largest third of which is baptist—THE quakers are numerous—THE whole is at least one fifth of the nation.

LEARNING.

THE modern dissenters possess men of eminent literature—IN every branch of science.—STUDENTS have the advantages of schools—ACADEMIES—TUTORS—LIBRARIES—INSTRUMENTS.—THEY have strong inducements to study—LEARNING is reputable to all—AND necessary to some—FOR the ministry—AND for support.—THE constitution of our churches is friendly to learning—FOR it has no secular interests and ecclesiastical honours to decoy students from books into the world—NOR any unnatural establishments to support—BY restraints—WRONG biasses—AND perverse reasons.—WE can go without danger—WHEREVER investigation can carry us.

POLITICAL SENTIMENTS.

MODERN nonconformity naturally leads us to study government — SIDNEY — LOCKE — MONTESQUIEU — BECCARIA — teach the notions — WHICH we hold — of government. — ALL think *the people* the origin of power — ADMINISTRATORS responsible trustees — AND the enjoyment of life — LIBERTY — AND property — THE right of all mankind — EXCEPT of those, whose crimes are allowed by the constitution to have disfranchised them. — EQUITY requires them to give up as much of their own as they have deprived others of. — WE differ — AS others do — concerning the best mode of government — BUT no one has ever attempted to subvert that which is established — OR even wishes to do so — AND all contribute cheerfully to support it. — OUR brethren the quakers seem to consider established priests as privateers — AND their church as a kind of letter of marque vessel — ALLOWED by authority indeed to plunder a supposed enemy — AND to make reprisals — BUT having no equitable — CONSTITUTIONAL claim — ON their property. THE notion is certainly just — PERHAPS not prudent to act upon it — HOWEVER it is no way hostile to civil government — FOR they submit when civil governors interpose.

PROPERTY.

THE property of the dissenters is very considerable. — PUBLIC property consists of funds —

ESTATES--ENDOWMENTS--SUBSCRIPTIONS—FOR the use of schools—UNIVERSITIES—MINISTERS ——ABLE—AND disable—POOR, &c.—PRIVATE property large—FOR their religion keeps them from many expensive vices.—NONCONFORMITY keeps them from many heavy episcopal exactions —CLERICAL feasts—SUBSCRIPTIONS—MISSIONS —&c.—RELIGION also makes them frugal—INDUSTRIOUS—AND commercial—SO that their property is more than equal to their wants.

CHURCH POLITY.

THE wisest in the world for six reasons.—1. IT is unconnected with every thing except religion.—2. IT is unsupported by irreligious motives—AND left wholly to conscience—SO that it is by principle—OR it is not at all.—3. SCRIPTURE is sole law.—4. CONSCIENCE is its *own* judge of the sense of scripture—AND thus the source of virtue is kept clean.—5. COERCION of all kinds is inadmissible.—6. IT despises the cant of heresy—SCHISM —CLERGY—THE church—EASE to doubting consciences—CONVENTICLES—SPIRITUAL lords—COURTS—LAWS—&c.—BY all which their ancestors were spiritualized out of their lives by faggots and fires.—THE nonconformists are WITH all their infirmities—THE excellent of the earth, in whom is all our delight—PEACE is within their walls—PROSPERITY in their palaces!

LECTURE XII.

From the Revolution to the accession of George III.

WILLIAM III. was a serious—GRAVE presbyterian—A friend to religious liberty.—HE passed the act of toleration—AND proposed a comprehension of his protestant subjects—BUT all his good designs were frustrated by prelates—PRIESTS—AND tories—WHO were all enemies to the revolution—SOME of them non-jurors—AND who defeated every design of liberty by the old artifice—PROPOSED by Tillotson—OF ecclesiastical commissions—AND convocations.—THEIR attachment to arbitrary principles was dangerous to church—AND state—AND their conduct to a presbyterian deliverer—AND to nonconformist coadjutors—COLOURED with the blackest villany—AND ingratitude.

QUEEN Anne went as she was led.—IN her first years she pursued the late king's measures—IN her last those of the tories—AND intolerant prelates.—DURING both these reigns the ruling clergy pursued intolerant measures—UNDER specious pretences of moderation—THEY veered about to all points of the compass—SAID and unsaid—DID and undid—BUT never departed from their own worldly interest.

REFLECT on the characters of the prelates of those times—TILLOTSON—TENNISON—STIL-

LINGFLEET—SHERLOCK—&c.—REMARK the cant of—THE church—THE clergy—DISSENTING teachers—CONVENTICLES—SCHISM—REASON—SCRUPULOUS consciences—&c.—DISTINGUISH between constitutional and accidental deformity.—DISSENTERS may be accidentally intolerant—BUT episcopacy is constitutional dominion over conscience—HENCE Burnets—AND Hoadlys—AND other tolerant prelates—PREACH rightly—BUT in vain—NOBODY is relieved by their declamations—THEY live down their own doctrine—FIND apologies—AND salvos—AND subtil distinctions necessary—AND do much damage to religion by inventing and publishing them.

THE accession of the present royal family was favourable to liberty.—THEIR majesties have always protected the toleration—BEFRIENDED the dissenters—AND execrated intolerance—BUT prelacy has hitherto defeated all liberal attempts towards religious liberty.—CHARACTERS of Archbishops Wake—POTTER—HERRING—SECKER—ALL of whom have risqued christianity to preserve the establishment—HAVE striven to *lose* rather than to *answer* arguments for religious liberty—AND have uniformly aimed to discountenance free inquiry—AND to disguise—AND perpetuate church-tyranny—AND this under the auspices of the best of princes—WHO have placed their glory in the felicity of their subjects.

PRESENT state of the dissenters is servile to episcopalians—LAWS that concern them divided into three classes—THE first disqualify our gentry

—RICH merchants — MANUFACTURERS — AND tradesmen—AND deprive them of civil rights.—THE second oppress our *ministers* with oaths—FINES—SUBSCRIPTIONS—AND penalties of several cruel kinds.—THE third oblige our *schoolmasters* to conform against conviction—AND conscience—AND spend their malevolent force on our innocent children—BY dooming them to ignorance—OR error and vice.—THUS by tithes actually paid—AND by gains denied—DISSENTERS—WHO are spoiled by episcopal tyranny—CONTRIBUTE more in proportion to the support of it than they do—WHO profit by it.

SUM up the whole by observing—THAT popery is despotism in the highest degree—THAT prelacy is popery restrained by civil power—THAT nonconformity is reason and religion—FRIENDLY to civil polity—AND hostile only to a *constitution* of tyranny—AND not to those, who support it.—THAT monarchy would stand safer without the incumbrance of episcopacy—THAN with it.—THAT the entire abolition of prelacy is to be effected without *any* civil inconvenience—AND with great advantages to the nation—AND to religion.—THAT the claim of dominion over conscience is an usurpation of Christ's prerogative—THAT his gospel is calculated for the destruction of it—THAT in God's due time it will effect it, according to the sure word of prophecy.—THAT till then the servants of Christ must prophesy in sackcloth—AND that they who do so merit the highest esteem here—AND will shine with peculiar glory hereafter.

THE MANNER OF USING THESE NOTES.

WE will suppose a number of young persons, more or less, assembled and seated in the meeting vestry, the minister's house or some convenient room borrowed or hired for the purpose, at six o'clock. We will suppose each to have in his pocket this lecture-book interleaved with blank-paper; a pencil for the purpose of adding on the blank leaves additional thoughts, arguments, and references, to be made by the minister; and Mr. Palmer's Catechism for the sake of ampler enlargements on topics only just touched in these notes.

We will suppose—that the minister enters precisely at the appointed time—that he silently pay his respects to the company and they to him— that he then goes to a small desk at the upper end of the room—kneel down with the company and beg in a short prayer the blessing of God on his endeavours—and then stand up and deliver his lecture—his auditors standing or sitting as they think proper.

Far be it from me to presume to dictate, or even to imagine that these rules are important, or the book itself necessary to our ministers. I have only put down their own thoughts to spare them the trouble of doing so, and to direct and assist our young people, who may be desirous of information on the most minute articles of form as well as power of acquiring religious knowledge. I trust these young catechumens will forgive my freedom.

I only consider myself as an inconsiderable errand goer in the church of God.

To convey my meaning less obscurely, I have written the first word of each new period in capital letters; and, I suppose, the following example from the beginning of the first Lecture may serve to shew how a minister would form the skeleton into a body, or how a young man may do so at home in his closet for his own private edification.

LECTURE I.

The doctrine of free religious inquiry, &c.

Brethren,

It was a just and beautiful idea, which the royal Psalmist entertained of religion, when he called it *inquiring in Jehovah's temple.* Thus he speaks in the twenty-seventh psalm, a psalm written in trouble, and strongly expressive of that felicity, which revealed religion affords to good men under the heaviest of all afflictions, those I mean, which concern the soul. Ignorance of God; frailty of nature; limits of condition; variety and speciousness of error; probability of annihilation or destruction; all these excite troubles in the minds of thoughtful men, and if they be miserable who can only conjecture concerning them, what must others be, who do not even aspire at the small consolation of conjecturing?

David implies two things in the expression just now mentioned. First, a right of inquiry in the

people. The people of God, the jewish church, and before them the patriarchal church, always enjoyed this privilege. Their religion consisted of articles to be believed, and injunctions to be performed. These were preached by Enoch, Noah, Moses, and the prophets; that is to say, they were proposed to the people first with evidence for examination, and last upon conviction for observation; for religion, which God required of them, is a reasonable service, an exercise of judgment and conscience, and not a course of mere animal motion. I said, the Jews enjoyed this privilege: but strictly speaking it is a native human right, that belongs to all mankind. Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free are all alike formed capable of making inquisition, and all possess strong natural emotions, and powerful exterior inducements, impelling them to make it: but as this right was not claimed by some pagans, and disallowed by some religions; and as it was both claimed, allowed and gratified by people under revealed systems, so I ventured to call it a privilege. Indeed to inquire where none can answer, although it be a human right, is yet nothing more than a right to pain. Where satisfaction is attainable by inquiry, the exercise of it is privilege and pleasure.

Revealed religion, (and this is the second thing implied,) revealed religion is sufficient to answer all reasonable inquiry. The temple contained the law, and the law contained answers even to inquisitive children:—*When your children say unto you, what mean you by this service? that ye shall*

say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses. Exod. xii. 26.

What fit question can be proposed concerning religious truth, which revelation does not answer? Do we inquire, is there a God? &c. &c.

This is sufficient to convey our meaning. The subjects may be varied, enlarged, abbreviated, illustrated, proved, a thousand different ways. It is one chief advantage of such analysis as these, that each idea may be clothed elegantly, plainly, or coarsely, according to the genius of the lecturer, and the conditions of the auditors. If the ideas be conveyed, the end is answered, be the style whatever it may.

A list of Books on these subjects.

Neal's History of the Puritans.
Robertson's History of Charles V.
Delaune's Plea.
Towgood's Dissent fully justified.
Calamy's Abridgment by Palmer.
Palmer's Catechism.
Oldmixon's Histories.
Writers on the Dissenters late application to parliament, such as Drs. Stennet, Kippis, Wilton, Messrs. Toulmin, &c. &c.
Confessional, and the several pieces occasioned by it.
Locke on government, and others of the same class.
Beccaria, Herport, Moshiem, Crosby, &c. &c.
Sermons of Gale, Bradbury, Watts, Foster, &c. &c. &c.

FINIS.

A

POLITICAL

CATECHISM:

INTENDED TO CONVEY,

IN A FAMILIAR MANNER,

JUST IDEAS OF

GOOD CIVIL GOVERNMENT,

AND THE

BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

[THE THIRD EDITION, PRINTED 1784.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

DURING the administration that prosecuted the unhappy war with America, all who had the virtue and courage to avow sound principles of civil government, were reproached with want of loyalty to the crown, and respect for government, and the struggles of liberty were called by many an ignoble soul, inflammatory, republican, and seditious. The nation was oppressed by principals, and insulted by their tools. The virtue of adversity is *resolute firmness;* the friends of freedom knew it, and gloriously persevered till they obtained the prize. To support the present excellent administration, * to prevent the return of such distracted times, to disseminate safe political principles, to place publick happiness on its true base, PUBLIC POLITICAL VIRTUE, are duties of all good citizens; and we humbly hope it will not be accounted presumption to endeavour to attract the attention of youth to this subject. This is the whole design

* Written at the time the late greatly lamented Marquis of Rockingham was at the head of publick affairs.

of the following essay: it is not a system of government, it is intended only to engage the British youth to study the subject in books professedly written for the purpose.

May the present happy revolution be the everlasting death of toryism, and the joyful resurrection of honest men!

The reader will suppose a youth just returned from school at the holiday vacation, and going to salute his father with his written piece in his hand.

March 1, 1784.

SATURDAY.

George. SIR, I do myself the honour to present my piece to you.

Parent. I am always happy, George, to see you improve.—You have a list of long words here.

MYSTERIOUSNESS.
CONSTITUTION.
ADMINISTRATION.
REPRESENTATION.
TAXATION.
RESPONSIBILITY.
GENERALISSIMO.
AGGRANDIZEMENT.
EMIGRATION.

I hope your tutor has enabled you to understand the *subjects* intended by these words.

G. He has, sir, I wrote them myself, I can spell them, and I believe, I can turn each into latin.

P. Softly, my good boy, you say you can write, and spell, and translate—What? the *words*—but I inquired whether you understood the *subjects* intended to be expressed by these words. This is quite another thing. Words are pictures of ideas, and each word in your piece is a representation

of a great number of ideas. You will forgive me, if I suspect you want a little tuition on these articles, especially when I add, I shall be proud to instruct you.

G. Thank you, sir. When shall I have the honour to wait on you?

P. Breakfast with me as many mornings as you have words in your piece. We will investigate one word, or rather one subject every morning, and by the end of the holidays you will be a politician.

G. Pardon me, sir, you have too much partiality for me. You were pleased to say a politician. Do these nine words contain a system of polity? How is it possible I should understand a system of government in ten days?

P. indeed I do not speak the mere language of affection. I protest it is the cool voice of my reason. Government, as well as every other science, beheld in the gross, resembles a loaded fruit tree in autumn: but as all the fruits, and foliage, and ramifications of the one, so all the departments of the other may be reduced to a few first principles, and these comprehended the whole is understood.

G. Then Sir, in ten days I should be able to govern a kingdom

P. No such thing. You must distinguish between theory and practice. These subjects are general principles, absolutely necessary to practice; but cases and circumstances occur in practice, which require present, personal genius and

dexterity in the use and application of these principles. Cannot you make this distinction?

G. I am trying, Sir.

P. Your brother James yesterday had a fit of the ague, and a fever followed.

G. He had, Sir.

P. Dr. Hyde was sent for.

G. He was, sir.

P. You were with him. What did the Doctor do?

G. He staid half an hour, and spent all the time in obtaining a clear notion of my brother's then present condition.

P. And when he came down stairs he sat down, and wrote a prescription, which the servant carried to the apothecary.

G. He did

P. Now do you not see in all this exactly what I mean by principle and practice in a science; as for instance by principles of physick, and the practice of these principles in actual healing?

G. I think I do, sir. Before Dr. Hyde came he perfectly understood anatomy, or the structure of the human body. Is anatomy what you call a medical principle, sir?

P. Certainly.

G. And is not the knowledge of drugs another principle, sir?

P. It is. Drugs and whatever else can be applied in the art of healing, physicians call the *materia medica.* Knowledge of solids and fluids, in short the construction of the human body—know-

ledge of minerals, vegetables, and so on in the *materia medica;* these in physick are general principles. Would you trust a physician, who was ignorant of these medical principles?

G. I believe if I were weak enough to do so once, he would put it out of my power to offend a second time against the first law of nature, self-preservation.

P. His general principles, however, you see must be directed by a wise attention to little circumstances of air, diet, exercise, and so on, which must determine the time, and the place, and the quantity of his applications. Dr. Hyde visited James to collect these circumstances, and then by prescribing reduced his principles to practice.

G. I see it clearly.

P. Now transfer these remarks to polity. Consider the constitution of a kingdom as you consider anatomy—and administration, taxation, and so on as you consider the *materia medica,* and you easily see a man ought not to be trusted to govern who is ignorant of sound principles of studied and approved polity.

G. I allow it, and I admit also that government, or the actual application of these principles of polity require personal qualifications, and attention to circumstances.

P. Suppose your physician a drunkard?

G. I should expect to be poisoned.

P. Suppose him a spendthrift or a miser?

G. I should suspect he would derange my affairs to arrange his own.

P. Suppose him a profligate, unprincipled infidel?

G. I would rather let my disease take its course, and say God's will be done, than hire a wretch to bully me into the grave.

P. Do you say the same of a political governor?

G. I must think a little.

P. O! fine fellow! persist in that, and you will make a man. Think! why the whole world might be wise, if they would but think—But half mankind don't think. The human soul is a fine vessel, George, but it rots in harbour for want of freight. —Well, sir, have you thought?

G. I think till I blush, and yet I have a difficulty which I cannot get over. I blush to think how defective my benevolence is. I do not know whether I have any. I would not trust my own life in the hand of one vicious or unprincipled physician; yet I seem inclined to commit the lives of an army and a navy, and a whole nation to an ignorant libertine. I am induced to do so by recollecting that some wicked men have been good governors.

P. So it is frequently said; but I doubt this. However, I think the question quite needless. If indeed there were no good men in a kingdom, we might be driven to the sad necessity of comforting ourselves with thinking that vicious characters might do; but all kingdoms have men of political virtue, and there is no need to employ the worthless while the worthy lie idle.

G. Pray, sir, what do you call political virtue?

P. You know every man is naturally obliged to perform some services to God—others to himself —and a third class to his neighbours.

G. I know it—and I think I know some, who are so intent on discharging one class of these obligations as to forget the other two.

P. Suppose a political governor to neglect divine worship, and to injure his own health by intemperance?

G. I should say he left two parts of three of his duty undone.

P. But suppose him to have just notions of government, and to discharge well a publick trust, would you say he left the other third part of duty undone?

G. By no means.

P. Would not you call this political virtue?

G. I know not what else to call it.

P. Would not you feel more esteem for him, and place more confidence in him, if he were an uniform character, discharging all other duties as well as this?

G. I should.

P. Is not confidence in political governors one branch of the peoples political virtue?

G. I think it is.

P. What! Is it a virtue to confide in men known to betray their trust?

G. No, certainly.

P. You say people ought to confide in their governors?

G. I said so unwarily. I mean, or ought to mean the political wisdom and virtue of their governors.

P. It is not the person of the governor then that is the object of the people's trust: but his qualifications.

G. I mean so.

P. There is then an object of confidence, a ground of reliance, a reason in a man why I should trust him, is there?

G. Undoubtedly.

P. What is it? skill? or integrity? or both?

G. If I know a man to be wise I can trust his judgment, but I cannot trust his conduct, unless I know him to be upright.

P. So you make integrity essentially necessaay to a good political ruler!

G. I do. How else can the people trust him?

P. Yet you said just now a wicked man might be a good governor? How is this?

G. I see how it is. A man wicked in some respects may not be wicked in every case, and where he is virtuous he may be trusted: as for instance, if he understand government, and faithfully discharge publick trusts, then I may trust him politically; if he understand physick, and have the integrity necessary to his profession, I may trust him medically: but in other cases, which he does not understand or practise, there he ceases to be an object of confidence. Am I right, sir?

P. Entirely. I shall expect you on Monday morning. Farewell.

MONDAY.

MYSTERIOUSNESS.

Parent. WELL, George, what says Dr. Johnson about mysteriousness?

George. I confess, sir, I have been looking, and he tells me, it sometimes signifies holy obscurity, and sometimes artful perplexity.

P. I wish authors have not made a distinction without a difference.

G. You think, sir, if holiness be obscure, it is because art has perplexed it?

P. Indeed I do.

G. Is not mysteriousness spun out of mystery, sir?

P. It is. Mystery is a fine material for manufacture. But, to come to the point, what is the plain English of mystery?

G. A mystery is a secret, I think. I can make no more of it.

P. Is not every thing, that you do not understand, a secret to you?

G. Certainly.

P. Are there not some secrets, which you do not choose to understand?

G. A great many, I suppose.

P. For example, you would not choose to understand by experience the horror of a guilty conscience after the commission of a great crime!

G. God forbid!

P. You would not stoop to understand how to cut out a piece of check for sailors shirts so as to make it yield the greatest profit to the slopseller!

G. I would not, unless I were a slopseller.

P. Observe, at this window, a dispute now agitating in the shrubbery between the gardener and his boy. You would not choose to investigate the cause of his shaking the hoe at the boy?

G. It's not worth my attention.

P. There are, then, some mysteries so painful, and others so insignificant, that you beg leave to have no acquaintance with them?

G. Certainly.

P. And you do not think the worse of yourself for your ignorance?

G. Quite the contrary. I prize my condition the more, because it does not expose me to the necessity of acquiring such low information at a price so dear.

P. Are there no secrets worth knowing?

G. A great many no doubt. Why else are young gentlemen educated, why are some put apprentices or articled clerks?

P. Is there any one of these a mystery in its own nature, or are they all mysterious by accident?

G. Pardon me, sir, I am not master of the question.

P. Let us take it to pieces. Is there not a mystery in ship-building?

G. To me there is.

P. And in navigating a vessel to the East or West Indies?

G. To me undoubtedly, for I have neither received tuition, nor employed my time about these subjects. I have neither served a ship-wright, nor been a voyage.

P. This is what I mean. If these subjects be unknown to you, it is not because they are in themselves inexplicable and unattainable, for this would be a mystery in the nature of the subjects, and then nobody could understand them; but it is because you have not turned your attention to them, and this I call mystery by accident.

G. Am I then to suppose myself capable of understanding every thing?

P. Is your eye capable of seeing every thing?

G. Every visible thing.

P. Is every sense of your body capable of receiving all sorts of impressions belonging to each sense?

G. It is with each sense as it is with my hearing. The same ear, that hears you speak, can hear all sorts of sounds from the roar of thunder down to the softest breeze.

P. Apply this to our subject. Every branch of knowledge is referable to some power of the mind, poetry to fancy, languages to memory, and so on: now if you have the mental power proper to one subject, you have the power, or ability, or capacity,

call it what you please to attain all subjects belonging to that power.

G. Do I understand you, sir? The same memory, that retains greek, would retain hebrew, arabick, welch, and all other languages, had I inclination, time and tuition to pursue them?

P. Just so.

G. I perceive then, there are many secrets worth knowing; but which I have no inclination to know, because my life is short; and I have no immediate business with them.

P. In your choice of knowledge, then, you would select important articles, would you?

G. What opinion would you form of my prudence, Sir, if I did not?

P. An opinion not much to your honour, George. But give me leave to put your skill to proof, by requiring you to inform me what art you think the most deserving of a young gentleman's attention?

G. I have heard my uncle say, the art of governing, Sir.

P. And do you think so?

G. I should think so, if people at my humble distance might presume to smatter a little about a science so profound.

P. Good George, where did you learn this unmanly style? I fear you keep bad company. You talk the language of broken spirited slaves living under arbitrary governors, where the people are nursed to think themselves beasts, and their tyrants almighty gods. This is smuggled, this is not British, George.

G. Pardon me, Sir, I speak as I think.

P. Pray what humble distance is that you talk of? The distance between the governors and the governed in a free nation is exactly the same as that between lessee and lessor.

G. I own I have understood, Sir, that there is, in all kingdoms impliedly, and in our kingdom expressly, a mutual compact between prince and people.

P. Very well. Where is the immense distance then?

G. Is not government a profound mystery, Sir?

P. You said there was a compact between prince and people?

G. I did.

P. What is a compact?

G. An agreement, a contract.

P. When two or more persons make an agreement, do not both parties thoroughly understand the terms?

G. If either did not it would be accounted fraudulent.

P. Suppose a company, the East-India company for example, to contract for so many ton of shipping, ought not both the company and the contractor to bargain in clear explicit, terms, intelligible to both parties?

G. Undoubtedly.

P. Suppose it does not suit all the company to take a personal concern in making the contract?

G. They would employ some few of themselves a committee to transact the business.

P. Whence do this committee derive ability to make this contract?

G. From their own personal qualifications. They are to be supposed men conversant in this sort of business.

P. Who is to judge of their ability?

G. The company that employ them.

P. And whence do they derive power to exercise this ability in the name, and for the benefit of the whole company?

G. From the appointment of the whole company.

P. Is the company then at a humble distance from the contracting parties?

G. The company are their employers, I perceive.

P. Do not the company retain a right of judging whether these parties discharge their trust?

G. Assuredly.

P. Is there any mystery in all this?

G. If I choose not to concern myself about it there is. Not otherwise.

P. You think you could obtain the knowledge of ship-timber, naval stores, prices of workmanship, and so on, if you applied yourself to these subjects?

G. I am sure I could, because the men, who do understand them, have no more bodily senses, no more mental faculties than I have, and the only advantage they have over me is application.

P. Now you talk English again, and you will speak good English if you apply these observations to that profound science, I say that profound science George, of government. Dare you, good humble soul, at your humble distance, presume to smatter in this subject?

G. If it be presumption, Sir, you inspire me to presume to answer any question you think proper to ask.

P. What is it to govern?

G. To rule, to regulate.

P. What is the government of a kingdom?

G. The regulation of it.

P. Ought any man to regulate my affairs without my consent?

G. Certainly not.

P. You think, no man ought to regulate my time, my diet, my dress, my money, my trade, or any thing else of mine without my consent?

G. No man ought to attempt it.

P. If I have not time to attend to all my affairs, would it not be wise in me to employ somebody to transact them for me?

G. It would.

P. Should I be wise to commit my affairs to a novice or a knave?

G. That no man would willingly do.

P. But how am I to know whether a man be wise and upright?

G. Nothing seems easier, Sir. There is no mystery in this, I am sure.

P. You think, I suppose, that a good tree brings forth good fruit?

G. All the world think so.

P. Suppose, for I am not infallible, and many men walk in masquerade, suppose I should find on trial that I am deceived in my man?

G. Discharge him, and employ another.

P. Thus far, then, there is no mystery. But may I apply these observations to the government of the affairs of a kingdom?

G. It should seem so.

P. You say to govern a kingdom is to regulate the affairs of it?

G. I do.

P. You say, the affairs of this kingdom are regulated according to compact?

G. Expressly so—a contract confirmed by oath.

P. You say, this compact ought to be, and actually is perfectly understood by both the contracting parties?

G. I do.

P. Do you see any mystery in all this?

G. There is none, and yet somehow or other I cannot get rid of the idea of *arcana imperii*, impenetrable depth in governors, which it is presumption in the governed to censure, to fear, or to suspect.

P. You should have lived in the reign of Q. Elizabeth, or in that of James I. But the idea is an excrescence. Are you willing to get rid of it?

G. Do me the honour to try, Sir.

P. Courage then! What is the usual cause of perplexity of ideas?

G. I am not prepared to answer.

P. Is a perplexed idea one idea only, or is it many ideas crowded into one? For example, have you a clear idea of a single tree, an oak, suppose?

G. I have.

P. Have you an idea as clear of one wilderness of trees, made up of oaks, elms, chesnuts, dwarfs, evergreens and so on?

G. My idea of a wilderness is complex, and composed of ideas of many different trees, and consequently in some degree perplexed, and it would be in a great degree perplexed if there were many trees in the wilderness, with which I was not acquainted.

P. If I were then to describe this wilderness by affirming it consisted of trees always green, and tall, should not I perplex the subject more?

G. Certainly. Oaks are not evergreens, nor are dwarfs tall.

P. How must I make the description plain?

G. By separating my general idea of a wilderness into many ideas of single trees growing together, and ascribing to each tree its own properties.

P. A general tree then is a creature of art?

G. It is, and I suspect no creature in nature can define it.

P. Apply this to our subject, and you will instantly perceive how your notion of a ruler became perplexed.

G. I see it plainly. You were speaking of a British government, and a British king, and I have been thinking of king in general. Mine was an abstract idea, or rather, a name without any precise idea at all.

P. This was the cause of your perplexity. A tyrant, who has subdued a nation into slavery, and silence, and horror, is deep and impenetrable, and he is so for the same reason a murderer is so; a declaration of the use he intended to make of his ability and power would defeat his design: but all this has nothing to do with the case of a prince, who accepts a crown on conditions, openly avowed, publickly investigated, and thoroughly understood by the whole world.

G. I perceive it, and I recollect, too, that you distinguished principles of polity, clearly and fully known, from application of these in actual government, which may require secrecy and dispatch.

P. By the way, George, I cannot help lamenting the course of education, and the choice of books in fashion in the schools. What do you think of Cæsar and Alexander and such heroes of antiquity?

G. I think they were butchers of mankind.

P. What can you think of men, who ascribe to such detestable tyrants the qualifications of good governors.

G. I think they are grossly ignorant, or extremely wicked. Their politicks are not fit for us.

P. These are the MAGNI, the GREAT, you know!

G. A tiger is greater than a cat, and my fear of each bears a just proportion to its size.

P. Under the tyranny of such rulers mystery is inculcated. The peoples spirits must be tamed. They must be trained up in implicit faith. The infinite ability necessary to regulate affairs—the utter incapacity of the people to judge of a science so profound as government—These are topics I would have you leave the hirelings of a despot to varnish. If the emperor of China had understood popery he would not have banished the Jesuit Missionaries.

G. Perhaps he had a mind to play Jupiter *solus?*

P. Perhaps so.

G. I think I love my country the better, Sir, for your conversation. I feel a little more self-importance, and I look up to my prince with more reverence, for this sort of government considers us as two open, ingenuous, sensible, honest men. The other dark system supposes fraud and fear, it makes a prince a knave, and a nation a fool; consequently it is disgraceful to both, yea, worse, it is dangerous to both, it generates suspicion and cruelty, by destroying mutual confidence, the only worthy bond of political union.

P. True.—Did I not prophesy you would be a politician? Remember to-morrow—and take one short lesson for this day—dare to think for yourself—If you must perish, ruin yourself, and don't let other men ruin you by inculcating credulity and diffidence.—The physician will tell you he

knows your constitution better than you do—the lawyer will pretend you do not understand law, and he must manage your property—the priest will settle your accounts with God—the draper will choose your cloth—and the taylor your fashion —and if you can but find money and implicit faith, back and legs to bear the burden, you may have the honour of ambling through the world, and carrying out of the dirt single, double, or treble, as many cunning men as choose to ride you. When a Jewish prince of this character died, he was buried with the burial of an ass.

TUESDAY.

CONSTITUTION.

George. OUR subject to day, Sir, is Constitution, the *British* constitution I suppose.

Parent. You have profited by yesterday's conversation, and are going to set out right by defining your terms, and by precisely settling what we are to talk about?

G. If I were going to travel eastward, and were to set the first step westward, every succeeding step in the same line would place me at a greater distance from my journey's end.

P. True.—You have been thinking about the British constitution I perceive?

G. I have, but thinking seems dangerous to self-sufficiency, for I always find I know less of a subject when I aim at precision, than I fancied I did.

P. What difficulty have you met with?

G. I have dipped into Judge Blackstone's commentaries, and I find in one place he calls king, lords, and commons *the* British *constitution*, and in another he says members of parliament are *guardians* of the constitution.

P. Distinguish between government and governors, and you will perceive both his expressions are right.

G. How Sir!

P. Do not you perceive a difference between a rule of action, and a ruler who enforces the rule; between regulation and regulator, government and governor?

G. I do. But I do not immediately comprehend the application.

P. Patience! What is it to constitute?

G. To make any thing what it is.

P. And what is constitution?

G. It is the act of making any thing what it is.

P. And what is the British constitution?

G. I fear I am aground.—Why, British constitution is that in Britain, which is what it is.

P. Is it not necessary to determine what thing you are inquiring into the constitution, or make of?

G. Pardon me, Sir, it may be necessary for you: but nobody can necessitate me to perform an impossibility. I protest I do not know what I am talking of.

P. You are talking of the British constitution; you say, constitution is the act of making something what it is, and I ask what this something is.

G. And I declare I do not know.

P. Suppose we try the word law, understanding by it rule of action, regulation of rights, or civil government? And suppose I were to affirm, that the municipal law of Great Britain is constituted, or made up of just and virtuous political princi-

ples; principles conformable to those of the eternal immutable and infallible law of nature? Would that elucidate the subject?

G. I should then perfectly comprehend how king, lords, and commons were guardians of the constitution, for it would mean, that they were the expositors, superintendants, protectors, and administrators of the law of nature, that is, the just rights of mankind.

P. The question, then, is, what are the NATURAL RIGHTS of mankind, for the preservation of which British law is constituted, or made up?

G. Certainly mankind have natural rights.

P. When an infant is born, has any man a right to kill him?

G. It would be murder. He has a right to life.

P. As the child grows up has he a right to the free use of his eyes, hands, and legs, all the senses of his body, and all the powers of his mind?

G. He has a right to liberty, and it would be wrong either to imprison his body, or to shackle his mind.

P. If he apply himself to labour, or to traffick, has he a right to enjoy and dispose of the profits of his own industry?

G. His property is truly his own. It is right he should enjoy it without fear.

P. If any man should deprive him of any of his rights by fraud or force, ought not justice to be done in his behalf?

G. Surely.

P. Man, then you allow, has a right to exercise and enjoy his own life, limbs, health, reputation, liberty, property, and conscience, and it is just to protect him in the enjoyment of his rights: or, to be more concise, every man has a natural right to personal security, personal liberty, and private property.

G. I allow the whole.

P. When you speak of the English constitution, then, you mean, that the law or the rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power to all the inhabitants of this kingdom, is made up of these just first principles?

G. I do.

P. And you look upon this to be civil government.

G. Yes.

P. And you consider governors, or the supreme power in this kingdom as guardians of this constitution, or body of right?

G. I do.

P. What does a member of parliament call his electors?

G. His constituents.

P. What is a constituent?

G. One who constitutes, or appoints another to be his deputy.

P. Do the electors of Great Britain appoint, or constitute the rights of mankind?

G. No surely. The rights of mankind are natural, and prior to all appointments.

P. Why then do you pretend to be constituents?

G. We are constituents, because we constitute or appoint deputies to administer our rights.

P. You see then there is a constitution of right independent of your appointment, and there is a constitution of persons to administer that right.

G. This last, I suppose, is what is usually intended, when we say the British constitution consists of king, lords and commons.

P. I suppose so.

G. I have understood, that the laws of society require us to give up some of our natural rights to public convenience.

P. It must be so. You said, man had a natural right to use his limbs, and senses, and mental powers,

G. Yes.

P. But man living in company can have no right to abuse his genius to defraud another man, or his hands to strike him.

G. Certainly. He would be guilty of a wrong by depriving another of a right.

P. What then are the private rights of men in society?

G. I have understood, they are either that residuum of natural liberty, which is not required to be given up, or they are civil privileges, which society engages to provide in lieu of the natural liberties given up by individuals.

P. So the British civil constitution is nothing but a declaration of the natural rights of mankind?

G. So I think. Pray, Sir, how old is this declaration of rights?

P. It is of the most remote antiquity, and at least coeval with our form of government. Even in the time of Alfred, above nine hundred years ago, the maxims of common law were called *folcrighte*, folkright, or rights of the people.

G. Have these rights been perpetually allowed?

P. Far from it; they have often been invaded. Sometimes one order of men, and sometimes another have violated these rights; but the violation being unnatural and repugnant to the constitution, has always produced convulsions in the state, and when the convulsion has been over the constitution has revived again.

G. These rights then are prior to Magna Charta?

P. Magna Charta is a declaration of ancient rights, and you will find at different periods of our history, near forty declarations of rights, as the *petition of right* in the reign of Charles I. The *habeas corpus* act in the reign of Charles II. The *bill of rights* at the accession of William and Mary, and the *act of settlement*, limiting the crown to the present royal family. All these are declaratory of the true, ancient, and indubitable rights of the people of this kingdom, the last statute expressly declaring that LIBERTY BY LAW IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

G. According to this doctrine, the people of England constitute, as was said before, a *form* of government for the preservation of these rights?

P. You said they were constituents, and the form of government, which they have constituted is

that, which they judge the best, a mixt monarchy. Do you think it the best?

G. It should seem so.

P. How many forms of government are there in the world?

G. Political writers say, only three.

P. What is a democracy, one of the three?

G. A democracy is that form of government, which lodges sovereign power in an aggregate assembly, consisting of all the members of a community.

P. What is an aristocracy?

G. An aristocracy lodges sovereign power in a council composed of select members.

P. And what is a monarchy?

G. In a monarchy sovereign power is lodged in a single person.

P. What requisites ought to be found in a well constituted form of government?

G. Political writers say three—*wisdom*, to discern the real interest of the community—*goodness* to endeavour always to pursue that real interest—and *power*, to carry this knowledge and intention into action.

P. And are these three requisites found in your constitution, which is mixt or made up of the three forms?

G. They are not only found there, but they are found there in union, which union is the excellence of our constitution, and gives it its singular beauty and superiority over the three.

P. What are the properties of the three forms of government you mentioned?

G. They say a democracy excels in virtue—an aristocracy in wisdom—and a monarchy in power.

P. What are the imperfections of the three?

G. Monarchs are more remarkable for extending and abusing power than for either wisdom or virtue. It is not the imperfection of the man; but of the condition he is in.

P. You may depend upon monarchy, then, for *power.*

G. Yes, but not for the use of it.

P. What is the imperfection of aristocracy?

G. You may depend upon a select council for *wisdom:* but not for virtue and power.

P. And what is the imperfection of a democracy?

G. You may depend on a democracy for political *virtue,* for they keep a jealous eye on the rights and liberties of mankind at large: but for wisdom to invent means, and for power to carry their good designs into execution, they must not be depended on. It is not the fault of individuals, it is the imperfection of the condition they are in.

P. So, by uniting the three you correct the imperfections of each, and produce a perfect form of government, a perfect constitution.

G. Pardon me, Sir, I do not say so.

P. Why what can disconcert your constitution?

G. Perhaps it is not so perfect in its kind as it might be: but, if it were, it is human, and therefore liable to wear away: if you will pardon the expres-

sion, I can conceive a thousand events, that might damnify this most excellent frame of government.

P. Name one.

G. Suppose the splendour and power of the monarch should blind the wisdom, and bribe away the virtue of the other two branches of the legislature?

P. The two would then become subservient to one, and in effect your constitution would be destroyed.

G. The effect would be destroyed I allow; but the name might remain.

P. So much the worse; the damage would not be so soon perceived. Suppose such an event to happen, what ought you to do?

G. I should think it my duty as a good citizen, to try to rouse the attention of my fellow citizens to the danger, and in my little sphere I would endeavour to abate the malignant influence.

P. It would seem then you only value the form of your government for the sake of government itself?

G. It ought to be so.

P. Recapitulate the subject.

G. British civil constitution is a phrase, strictly speaking, expressive first of a natural constitution of rights, native and inherent in all the inhabitants of this kingdom and in all mankind—next of a body of laws, peculiar to this kindgom, declaratory of these natural rights—and lastly, of a form of making and executing these laws by king, lords, and commons,

the safety and excellence of which consists in each constituent part retaining its own nature, and place.

P. Have you not observed two or three vulgar errors in general conversation concerning the British constitution?

G. I am not aware of them at present.

P. You have heard people talk in the highest strains of our excellent constitution, our perfect constitution.

G. I have.

P. Ought we not to distinguish between absolute and comparative perfection. The British constitution has a comparative perfection, for compared with other governments it is the best: but as some things are incorporated in it, which are not congenial to its nature, it has not absolute perfection, for it is capable of improvement. I could mention a few instances.

G. I believe so.

P. Have you not also heard people talk at large about framing our excellent constitution, as if all our ancestors met in one large plain at one time, and all cool, deliberate and disinterested, formed the present system of government? Others again talk as if all our immunities proceeded from the condescension and benevolence of our princes. Both sorts discover gross ignorance. Our constitution, like our language, is a fineness produced by the friction of contending interests, and we ought to ascribe the delicacy and elegance of it to providence working by time, and a course of events.

G. So I think indeed.

P. Have not you seen enthusiasts to the wisdom of our ancestors? The wisdom of our ancestors renounced paganism: but it was their folly, that established popery. The wisdom of our ancestors built houses: but it was the folly of the lords of castles, that made dens and dungeons in them. The wisdom of our ancestors induced them to travel: but it was the wisdom of the moderns, that made good roads.

G. We are then to suppose that our ancestors, like other peoples ancestors, had some wisdom, and some folly, or some weakness, that could not give their wisdom effect.

P. You say right. It would not be fair in our successors to judge of our political wisdom by our actions, for we know many good things which we have no power to bring to pass: but which future and happier ages will congratulate themselves for discovering, only because they can reduce their knowledge to practice.

G. I heard a gentleman say, one day, that he considered the whole duration of the world as seventy, the usual duration of the life of man.

P. And what age did he say the world had now attained?

G. About sixteen.

P. I hardly think so much, for, like little boys, we have not left off fighting yet. However, it will soon be over with us, let us live happy while we are in it.

WEDNESDAY.

ADMINISTRATION.

P. HITHERTO, George, we have endeavoured to select our words, and to affix precise ideas to them, that we might know what we were talking about. Will you not smile when I tell you to day we are going to speak of one thing under a term that stands for another? We are going to examine the king's prerogative, and we examine it under the word Administration, which means the substitutes of the king, or, more strictly, the under servants of the people.

G. I shall suspend my observation, Sir, till you explain yourself.

P. I think it necessary, even in a rude sketch of our government, to examine the prerogatives of that one royal person, with whom the wisdom and virtue of our constitution have lodged that immense trust, the sole executive power. And I think it constitutional to examine these in the light of Administration, because, by a supposition of law, for the prudent prevention of many inconveniences, and for the actual production of many

noble effects, the king, in his political capacity, is always supposed a perfect being who can do no wrong, and his ministers are supposed to advise and be answerable for every act of royalty, subject to remonstrance and complaint.

G. I see the reason of all this; and I suppose you will enlarge on this under the article of *Responsibility.*

P. I intend to do so. At present let us confine ourselves to prerogative.

G. What is prerogative in general, Sir?

P. Pre-eminence, and regal prerogative in particular, is the pre-eminence of the king over and above all other persons.

G. Wherein does it consist?

P. Constitutionally in *three* articles, *dignity, power,* and *revenue;* to which I add a fourth, greater than all the three, which comes to pass eventually, and that is *influence.*

G. What is royal *dignity,* Sir, which you call the first prerogative?

P. It is the possession of certain attributes or perfections, essential to that respect, which ought to be paid to the supreme executive power. More explicitly, the law ascribes to the king *sovereignty, perfection* of action and thought—*immortality* and *ubiquity.*

G. It is impossible the most exalted of human beings should possess these attributes.

P. All the world allow this: but these are suppositions of law, and are incorporated into our

constitution for several noble purposes, all beneficial to society.

G. This is then the dignity, or the majesty of our kings. What is the second prerogative, *power?*

P. This, strictly speaking, is the executive part of our constitution, and it consists in a great variety of exertions, of which a slight arrangement will enable you to form some idea. You know this kingdom hath some connections with other states.

G. And I suppose the king has the power of receiving and sending ambassadors, residents, and consuls?

P. He has.

G. Has his majesty also the power of making treaties, leagues, and alliances?

P. He has, both with princes and states.

G. May he also make war and peace?

P. Both; and in these are included the power of granting letters of marque to individuals to distress the enemy, and of safe-conducts and passports.

G. This is a great trust.

P. A greater than it may at first appear; but it is executed by ministers of state. Let us go on to domestic affairs.

G. That is to exertions of power at home. What are they, Sir?

P. The king, you know, is one constituent part of legislative power.

G. Yes.

P. He has the prerogative of convoking, adjourning, proroguing, and dissolving parliament; and if the two houses sit and make provisions, he may reject them, and refuse passing them into laws.

G. Is not the king also the power that moves the national military arms?

P. His majesty is generalissimo, he has the sole power of raising and regulating fleets and armies, of officering the militia, of erecting, manning, and governing forts, of appointing ports and havens, wharfs and quays, of building beacons, light-houses, and sea-marks, and of prohibiting the exportation of arms and ammunition.

G. An immense multitude of people must be employed to administer this branch of the royal prerogative.

P. An immense multitude is employed, and the whole business is an amazing system of boards, courts, officers, clerks and arrangements, under the direction of a few principal persons appointed by the crown for the purpose, as secretaries, admirals, generals, governors, paymasters, and so on.

G. To this power must be added, I suppose, another, that is, the power of administering justice?

P. Yes; the king is entrusted by the constitution with the conservation of the peace of the kingdom, and his majesty does this by erecting courts of judicature, and by appointing both supreme and subordinate officers and magistrates, as

the Lord Chancellor, the Judges, the Sheriffs, the Justices of the Peace, under each of which are innumerable officers of inferior jurisdiction, from the Court of Chancery down to the bailiff, the jailor and the publick executioner.

G. The prerogative of royal proclamation belongs to this article, does it not, Sir?

P. It does; the constitution gives the king power to issue proclamations, on condition they be according to law.

G. Very well.

P. The next article of prerogative, is that of conferring honour, office and privilege.

G. His majesty confers all degrees of nobility and knighthood, I know.

P. He also erects and disposes of offices, for they are honours; and he can create new offices and new titles, though he cannot annex any fees to them. He can confer privileges on individuals, and erect corporations.

G. This trust supposes, to the honour of the prince, that he is the best, yea, the sole judge of merit.

P. Another royal prerogative is, the direction of commerce, and to this belongs the regulation of markets and fairs, with their tolls, weights, measures, monies, coinage, and so forth.

G. An ample trust, this!

P. Nothing to the next, which is the royal prerogative of being the only supreme head on earth of the church of England.

G. The king administers this prerogative by the clergy.

P. By this prerogative the king convenes, prorogues, and dissolves all ecclesiastical synods and convocations; nominates archbishops, bishops, deans, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, under whom are innumerable courts, officers, and administrators, for the purpose of christening, marrying, burying, performing publick worship, ordaining candidates for the ministry, proving wills, collecting tithes, and so on. A mixture of civil and sacred things.

G. From some one or other of these prerogatives, I should suppose his majesty the head of all literary bodies, as royal schools, colleges, and universities; of most publick charities, as many are royal foundations, and many more are incorporated; of all trading companies, and even of races, theatres, and publick amusements.

P. Directly or indirectly it is so.

G. The next prerogative you said was *revenue*,

P. The king's revenue is usually divided into ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary revenue of the crown is small and inadequate to the support of the royal dignity. Formerly it consisted of the custody of the temporalities of bishops during the vacancy of the see, and some other ecclesiastical claims, which are now disused; demesne lands, forest rights, fines, wrecks, profits of mines, treasure-trove, waifs, estrays, confiscated estates, forfeitures, escheats of lands, custody of idiots, and many more of the same antique cast, formerly

of great value, and consequently occasions of intolerable and vexatious oppressions. Almost all these have been alienated from the crown, the remainder yield very little, and the deficiency is now amply supplied by what is called the extraordinary revenue.

G. The modern revenue, then, is in lieu of ancient prerogatives?

P. It is intended to be so. The first branch is the annual *land-tax*. Upon an average, this is said to be about three shillings and three-pence in the pound a year. This is assessed and raised by commissioners and their officers.

Next is an annual *malt-tax*, properly an annual excise on malt, cyder, and perry.

Customs or duties, payable upon merchandize exported and imported, make a third branch of prodigious magnitude, and create a great multitude of officers, as commissioners, collectors, receivers, surveyors, inspectors, examiners, clerks, tidesmen, and so on.

Next is an inland revenue, called *excise* duty, a tax imposed on commodities of daily home consumption and use, malt, beer, spirits, candles, soap, coaches, plate, hides, glass, coffee, tea, paper, pasteboard, vinegar, and an endless number of other articles. The excise is managed by a great number of commissioners, collectors, secretaries, accomptants, surveyors, auditors, clerks, supervisors, and officers.

The fifth branch of revenue is the *post office*, or duty for the carriage of letters. This also employs

a great number of officers from the post-masters general down to the bell-men, who collect, the post-men, who deliver letters, and the boys, who carry the mails.

A sixth branch is *salt-duties*, a sort of excise, but managed by different commissioners, who have a number of officers under them.

A seventh branch of revenue is *stamp-duties*. This is a tax upon almost all parchments and papers, on which any legal proceedings are written, upon licenses for retailing wines, upon almanacks, news-papers, advertisements, cards and dice, &c. This is a branch of amazing magnitude, and employs commissioners, receivers, inspectors, stampers, engravers, clerks, and so forth.

The eighth branch is a duty upon *houses* and *windows*, and employs, as all the other duties do, a great train of officers.

The ninth branch of revenue is a duty upon *licenses* to hackney coaches and chairs in and about London. This also is managed by commissioners and other officers.

The tenth is a duty of one shilling in the pound upon *offices* and pensions, salaries, fees and perquisites payable to the crown. Have I not tired your attention?

G. That would ill become me. Give me leave to say, Sir, enormous as this list appears, I recollect several articles you have thought proper to omit. There is a revenue arising from a tax upon *servants*, another from a tax upon *post-horses*.

P. I have purposely omitted several, for, recollect, I am speaking to you not of taxation but of royal prerogative, and administration of executive power; and I only mean to give you a brief sketch of a boundless subject, the particulars of which actually fill thousands of folios.

G. I am then to understand, that all this revenue is received and expended by the king.

P. Not in his own person, but by substitutes or deputies, to whom the administration of the executive power is entrusted by the crown.

G. How is the money disposed of?

P. A part of it is appropriated to the payment of the interest of the national debt, and a part to the payment of the civil list.

G. What is the civil list, Sir?

P. It is the list, roll, or catalogue of all expences of civil government, as those of his majesty's houshold, of the houshold of the queen and royal family, of salaries to the great officers of state, to the judges, ambassadors, private expences of the king, secret service money, pensions, bounties; in a word, of every of the king's servants.

G. The civil list then, is properly the king's revenue, and what goes to pay the interest of the national debt is the revenue of the publick.

P. More strictly speaking, the latter is the revenue of the creditors of the publick; however, all is collected and distributed by officers of the crown.

G. So, if I receive a half years' dividend at

the bank, it is the king who pays me by the hands of one of his clerks in administration.

P. Yes. Need I enter upon the article of *influence?*

G. It would be no compliment to my understanding.

P. Allow me, however, to say, that the influence of the crown is an effect, which may have risen from two causes. It may have proceeded from a plan of arbitrary government, which, if so, must have been concerted long before the present generation existed; or it may have proceeded, without any such design, from a mere course of events, a set of accidents.

G. Some call this influence enormous and excessive.

P. This enormity of crown influence depends on something else. If the other two branches of legislature have equal influence, it is not enormous, for the state is safe when the component powers are in equilibrium: but if the influence of the crown preponderates so as to give irregular direction to the other two powers, then indeed it has acquired enormity.

G. What is your opinion, Sir?

P. Rather say, what is the resolution of the house of Commons.

G. All the boys at school have that by heart, that is, that *the influence of the crown hath increased, is increasing, and* OUGHT TO BE DIMINISHED.

THURSDAY.

REPRESENTATION.

P. WHEN we speak of administration, George, we speak of what *is;* but when we speak of representation, we speak of what *ought to be*

G. Why so, Sir?

P. Because administration, you see, is in effect the king's prerogative, and we would not seem to want respect for that branch of government, the executive power.

G. But representation being the people's birthright, is more immediately our own province. Is that your meaning, Sir?

P. Exactly.

G. Are you represented in parliament, Sir?

P. No.

G. Then your family, consisting of more than twenty of us, is not represented.

P. No; our parliamentary representation is not a representation of persons, but of property.

G. Is your property represented, Sir?

P. No. My estates are copyhold, and leasehold, and personal estate. I have no freehold.

G. It is not all property, then, that is represented.

P. No; it is property of that peculiar tenure, which we call freehold.

G. How many freeholders are there in this parish?

P. About four.

G. Yet this parish consists of some hundreds.

P. Yes; and I, who am not represented, was obliged to give old Sam the taylor, who botches for the labourers, who is represented, some pieces of wood to prop up his crazy freehold cottage, or else Sam's cottage would not have been represented.

G. You said you were speaking of what *ought to be.*

P. Excuse me for speaking first of what ought *not* to be.

G. You think representation then, Sir, imperfect?

P. Extremely so; and I think I see *four* imperfections in what we call parliamentary representation, in the nature, the subject, the mode, and the end. These are not constitutional imperfections, but accidental ones; the being of which probably originated not in design and depravity, but in a train of events. I will explain myself.

G. What do you mean, Sir, by the nature of representation?

P. The properties of it.

G. What ought these to be?

P. Representation is a human creation, and was intended to be, and therefore ought to be an exact balance to the prerogatives of the other branches

of the legislature, for by this balance the liberties of the people are preserved from encroachment.

G. It ought then to have dignity, power, revenue, and influence, that so, having the same prerogatives as the crown, and in the same degree, it may be a counterpoise.

P. Exactly so. Accordingly the *dignity* of parliament, as an aggregate body, is preserved by an ascription of properties and perfections, as independence, incorruption, fidelity, magnanimity, and so on. The *power* of parliament is that of making laws. In regard to *revenue*, all supplies are raised by them; and in respect to *influence*, it will always be proportional to the benefits which the people derive from their representatives.

G. You allowed yesterday, that the properties ascribed to the executive power, could not be found in any mortal. Are not the properties ascribed to the legislative power of the same kind, mere suppositions of law?

P. By no means. The properties ascribed to the person are, strictly speaking, found in the executive power. Executive power has ubiquity, for it is every where acting at the same time; besieging a town in the army, destroying an enemy's fleet at sea in the navy, guarding the trade in a convoy, or the coasts in a militia, distributing justice in courts of law, collecting customs in the ports, excise in warehouses, receiving and paying, rewarding and punishing at the same moment. Now as all this is the king's business, and as he executes

it by deputation, we say he hath ubiquity, and so of the rest.

G. His majesty then has this property in proxy?

P. Yes; but as our representatives are themselves proxies for us, they cannot vote by proxy, and herein they differ from lords of parliament, who sit there in their own right, and who therefore can vote by proxy. And further, as they cannot delegate any to act in their stead, so it is impossible they should possess any perfections, except such as are personal. These are in some degree in each individual, and in a high degree in the collective body, and these I call the nature of representation.

G. You said *independence* was one property of parliament.

P. It is an essential property interwoven in the constitution, and it implies the absence of all undue influence of every kind. Neither the crown, by means of the army, or the officers of some branches of the revenue, nor the peers, by means of lords of parliament, or lords lieutenants of counties, may interfere. No, nor may the candidates themselves use any bribery or corrupt influence under heavy penalties.

G. You said *incorruption* was another property.

P. Yes, for a man may go uninfluenced into the house, and become corruptible by strong temptations there: in such a case, he would cease to be *faithful* to the trust reposed in him by the people, and of course would lay aside all that eleva-

tion of soul, which we call *magnanimity*, and would sink from the noblest of all creatures, an object of public confidence, to the despicable state of a minister's tool.

G. Have not our legislators claimed these excellent properties, and passed many laws to secure them?

P. They have: but it is confessed, all means have been found inadequate.

G. Who can help it?

P. Not they who are so infatuated as not to see it, nor they who are so interested as to deny it, nor they who spend life in declaiming against human depravity.

G. Who then?

P. Such as understand the Lord's prayer, *lead us not into temptation.*

G. How do you mean, Sir?

P. Why I mean, that if human frailty is so great, it ought not to be put to such severe trials as endanger the virtue and felicity of a person, a family, a county, a kingdom, a world; for a British parliament may affect all these.

G. So you would keep men virtuous, by putting it out of their power to be vicious.

P. What can you do with them?

G. But is this possible?

P. Every thing that ought to be is possible. How much money do you think was spent at our last election?

G. It was reported above a hundred thousand pounds.

P. Well, let us suppose only a hundred thousand pounds. Upon whom was this spent?

G. Upon freehold electors. Old Sam was drunk for a week.

P. Suppose the electors had been ten times as many?

G. Why then ten times as much must have been spent. It would have cost a million.

P. And suppose instead of electing representatives for seven years, we had elected them only for one?

G. Then our seat in parliament would cost a million a year.

P. Would not annual parliaments and equal representation, put it absolutely out of the power of the whole world to destroy the independence of parliament?

G. It should seem so; at least it is worth trying. But have we a RIGHT to these?

P. We have both a natural and constitutional right to these. Septennial parliaments are of late date, triennial are not much older, and it was no longer ago than the reign of Henry VI. that the people at large were deprived of this right, and the qualification of electors for knights of the shire determined, to be the owning of a freehold of the value of forty shillings a year, which by the way was then equivalent to twenty pounds of present value. As to boroughs, we say nothing of them under this article; they do not deserve it.

G. You spoke of the *subject* of representation, Sir?

P. Yes, I ask *what* is represented. What ought to be represented?

G. The people undoubtedly.

P. Not dead houses and lands?

G. No. *Bona fide*, the people themselves.

P. What! all the people?

G. If all the people have lives, liberties, and properties, all the people have a natural right to choose the guardians of them.

P. They have also a constitutional one.

G. Would not this endanger property, by putting the poor on a level with the rich?

P. Neither property nor person ought to be endangered; but if one must suffer, better damage property than person: however, this is no question here, for the danger of both lies elsewhere, I mean in undue influence, not in the numbers of electors or elected. Keep representation pure and uninfluenced, and all things are safe

G. But is such an election practicable?

P. As easy as the election of a coroner, or a sheriff in the city.

G. What fault do you find, Sir, with the *mode* of representation?

P. The establishment of the forementioned qualification having changed the subject of representation from person to property, you would suppose property was equally represented.

G. Certainly I should; whatever is represented ought to be equally represented.

P. Look at this scheme.

> " A scheme of the proportions of the several counties in England paid to the land-tax in 1693, and to the subsidies in 1697, compared with the number of members they send to parliament."

" In this scheme the proportions are thus considered, viz. That as the whole kingdom sends 513 members to parliament, so the whole of each tax is divided into 513 equal parts; and the first column shewing the name of the county, the second shews how many of the 513 parts each county paid to the land-tax in 1693, the third how many of the 513 parts each county paid to the subsidies in 1697, and the fourth, how many of the 513 members each county sends to parliament."

Counties.	Parts of the land tax.	Parts of the subsidy.	Parliament members.
Bedford	7	4	4
Berks	10	8	9
Bucks	12	7	14
Cambridge	9	6	6
Chester	7	5	4
Cornwall*	8	5	44
Cumberland*	1	1	6
Derby	6	4	4
Devon*	21	19	26
Dorset*	9	6	20
Durham*	3	4	4

Counties.	Parts of the land tax.	Parts of the subsidy.	Parliament members.
Essex	14	13	8
Gloucester	12	8	8
Hereford	5	4	8
Hertford	11	8	6
Huntingdon	4	3	4
Kent	22	15	18
Lancaster*	5	7	14
Leicester	9	7	4
Lincoln	19	11	12
Middlesex	80	185	8
Monmouth	3	2	3
Norfolk	22	20	12
Northampton	12	8	9
Northumberland*	4	3	8
Nottingham	7	4	8
Oxon	10	7	9
Rutland	2	1	2
Salop	7	6	12
Somerset	19	15	18
Southampton*	14	11	26
Stafford	7	6	10
Suffolk	20	15	16
Surrey	18	16	14
Sussex	16	10	28
Warwick	20	8	6
Westmoreland*	1	1	4
Wilts*	13	8	34
Worcester	9	7	9
York*	24	23	30
Wales	11	12	24
All England and Wales	513	513	513

	Land.	Subs.	Memb.
Note, That the proportions of the 6 northern and 5 western counties marked thus * are	103	88	216
And that Middlesex and Essex are	104	198	16

Cities are included in their respective counties.

You see Middlesex, which paid 80 parts of the tax, and 185 of the subsidy, sent only 8 members to Parliament; and Cornwall, which paid only 8 parts of the tax, and 5 of the subsidy sent 44. Is this proportional?

G. No, surely.

P. There is a worse article than this in the present management. Canvassing, carousing, intoxication, bribery, perjury, and all the usual attendants on a modern election, disgrace candidates and destroy all confidence in them, and at the same time deprave and debauch the morals of the whole community. In the democratical part of our constitution, there is an exercise of sovereignty by suffrage; but never was the majesty of democracy so debased as it is in some elections. Candidates lose all reverence for the people, their constituents, and the people lose all that respect and reverence for representatives, which men in such high trust should always retain.

G. The means being thus ineffectual, the *end* of representation is not answered. Is that your meaning, Sir?

P. Yes, verily. Why is democracy interwoven in our constitution with aristocracy and monarchy? Is it not for the sake of its political virtue? And if it ceases to be virtuous, will it not yield to the frictions of wisdom and power essential to the other two parts? In such a case is not the very existence of our constitution in danger, and ought not all possible remedies to be applied? It would be as absurd to deprive the crown of power, and the nobles of consultation, as it would be to defraud the people of virtue. I mean all along *political virtue;* the peoples' thorough knowledge, just estimation, and actual disposal by unbiassed suffrage of their lives, liberties and properties, and all their natural rights. ——I forgot you are a scholar, George, take a crust of Ovid with you—

———Magna fuit censuque virisque
Perque decem potuit tantum dare sanguinis annos,
Nunc humilis veteres tantummodo troja ruinas
Et pro divitiis tumulos ostendit avorum.

FRIDAY.

TAXATION.

P. I THINK we agree that every man has a *natural* right to his property, be it little or much.

G. We allow further, that his passing out of a natural state of solitude, into a *civil* state of society, does not alienate this right.

P. Individuals uniting together in society, have a joint interest in securing to each other the enjoyment of this right, and it is one principal excellence of our constitution, that though the giving up a part in trust to one of the community to be employed for the protection and benefit of the whole, be absolutely necessary to the private enjoyment of the rest, yet not the least atom is to be given without their free consent.

G. A great excellence it is, but no more than a right.

P. True. Taxation strikes me in *eight* points of light. A sort of arrangement may serve for a clue to guide us. The first is the *origin* of taxes.

G. Do you mean to enter on a history of taxation, Sir?

P. No, no. A history of oppression would not

convince you, that you ought to be oppressed. I mean what makes taxes necessary?

G. The expences of government, I presume?

P. Yes; and the expences of government include a great many articles, as the expences of a family do. Some are necessary for safety and defence, some for convenience, some for pleasure, some for justice, some for generosity, all for the publick good; but none for vicious or needless purposes.

G. Of all this I have understood, it is the ancient indisputable right of the house of commons in the first instance to judge.

P. They have the *sole* right of raising and modelling the supply.

G. Whence have the representatives this right but from their constituents?

P. They derive it from their principals, the people; and in this instance, in spite of Voltaire, the MAJESTY of the people is avowed by our constitution, for the Commons tax the Peers as well as themselves; but they never suffer the Peers to tax them, nor even to amend or alter their money bills; a rejection is all the power they allow them, as jealous in this article of the upper house as of the crown.

G. Taxes, then, ought not be raised without just and necessary causes, of which the people by their representatives are sole and competent judges.

P. Certainly. The next article that strikes me is the *quantity* of taxation.

G. How would you rate this?

P. As I do my own expences.

G. You would ascertain your income; then provide for your family, and then apply the surplus to what you thought most expedient.

P. Yes; and I would judge of this expedience, by estimating the object of my pursuit, and by comparing my own means to obtain it. Can I spare so much, and is the purchase worth what I can spare? These questions, simple and easy as they are in little matters, become extremely difficult in large, complex, political cases; and hence the absolute necessity of a minister's attention to all and every source of information, and particularly to popular parliamentary investigation, for the people are most likely to know what they can afford to part with. What millions of publick money have been spent to purchase nothing, or worse than nothing, guilt and infamy.

G. You mean in war, I suppose. How mortifying is the thought! The most bloody and expensive wars in the world have been about things of no importance.

P. Ah! there lies the ruinous mischief, war! *Bella, horrida bella!*

G. So they said two thousand years ago; yet we go on!

P. Who go on? It is not the people—the crime lies elsewhere. As there are very few just wars, and very few disputes worth the blood and treasure spent to decide them, so there are very few nations that can afford long to support them, because there are very few governors of nations that place the felicity of the executive power in the com-

merce and wealth, the freedom and happiness of the people.

G. Is there no way of simplifying taxation so as to ascertain what a nation can afford to spend in wars and disputes?

P. I have thought it not impossible, especially if we advert to the *nature* of our taxes; this is a third point of light in which they may be considered.

G. Of what nature are they?

P. I mean to distinguish between principal and interest. The principal is borrowed and spent, and the taxes are mortgaged to pay the creditors; or to familiarize the matter, what can our neighbour Sir Richard afford to spend in law suits? You know his condition; he has a good estate, a part is his lady's jointure, the rest is mortgaged to pay the interest of money which he has borrowed and spent. Suppose his lady's jointure to support his family, and if you please resemble this to our civil list. Suppose his rents to yield more than will pay the interest of the mortgage, and resemble this to the surplus remaining after the creditors of the public are paid: this surplus is the whole in either case, that can be spared for litigation, and this ought not to be applied to such a purpose till the mortgage is lessened, if not paid off.

G. Suppose the nation at peace, and wholly or nearly out of debt?

P. I doubt whether, if it could be, it would be prudent now wholly to discharge the national debt: but even in such a case, I should imagine, that so much as the balance of *foreign* trade was in our

favour, and no more, could we, strictly speaking, afford to expend in foreign disputes and wars. Happy, too happy, if we could accumulate wealth, till we could afford to lend other nations on proper security, and so attach them to our interest!

G. If this point of light be not just, it is at least pleasing.

P. There is a pretty sure criterion of judging of the balance of foreign trade, that is, by the course of exchange, and it is very certain the annual expence ought not to exceed the annual revenue.

G. Have we exceeded this?

P. We have exceeded it beyond belief. The national supplies, which have been raised within the last hundred years, that is, from the accession of William and Mary, 1688, to the present time, exceed the sum of five hundred millions, and of this enormous sum, almost two hundred millions are funded, * and we are loaded with perpetual taxes to pay the interest; and this in several capital articles not for the dignity or safety of the nation, but for purposes ignorant or atrocious.

G. How are the people brought to consent to such ruinous measures?

P. This is the fourth light I view taxation in, *the method of obtaining the peoples' money.* We mentioned just now our neighbour, Sir Richard.

G. We did.

P. Sir Richard had once a thrifty steward, a man of real business and integrity, who so managed the estate as to supply all his master's real wants, and to maintain his rank with dignity. Old

* The funded debt is now (1805) *six hundred millions!*

Solomon, the Jew, who had accumulated a great sum of money in trade, and wanted to make an exorbitant interest of it with good security, contrived to insinuate himself into the favour of Sir Richard, and in short induced him to part with his steward, and to place in his office a man of great dissipation and of no management. What Solomon expected came to pass. The estate neglected did not yield, and the family all dissipated and extravagant, required more as the revenue became less, and presently all were in want of money. Solomon's eldest son gravely offered to befriend his neighbour in distress, and lent large sums to supply present exigencies, requiring nothing, good honest man, except proper security in case of death; and some discounts because he must put himself to great inconveniencies to advance large sums at short notice, especially upon securities that would not yield for some time. In brief, Solomon became the friend of the family; favours, privileges, and douceurs were heaped upon him, and his friendship has nearly completed the ruin of all the family.

G. Who was most to blame, Solomon or the steward?

P. Solomon and steward were satan and sinner: but Sir Richard himself was most to blame for not looking into his affairs. He should either have done this himself, or frequently have examined and audited his steward.

G. Suffer me not to misunderstand you, Sir. You think Great Britain an estate that belongs to the people?

P. Certainly I do. I have so many acres of land, and you have a street of houses, one of your uncles has merchandize, and another corn, cattle, wool, money, and so on.

G. And you think there are many Solomons in Great Britain, who have no notions of right and wrong, and whose whole science is gain and loss?

P. Undoubtedly I do. Multitudes of such men live upon the publick spoil. Solomon's Rabbi flatters him, his solicitor glosses for him, his attorney puzzles, and his porter and Sir Richard's gamekeeper bully for him, his tradesmen and servants all contrive to please him for the same glorious reason, for which he humours Sir Richard, that is, because they gain by doing so.

G. The evil lies then in our public stewards, our representatives, for they need not ruin us to enrich this class of men.

P. No, the evil lies in yourselves; you should look into your own affairs, audit your steward's accounts once a year, and change hands 'till you get good and capable men.

G. Suppose we have not virtue to do so?

P. There wants no virtue; sense of shame is enough. The fear of bankruptcy generally makes the indolent industrious, and the drunken sober: when it does not their condition is desperate.

G. In what other light do you view taxation, Sir?

P. I consider *the manner of laying and collecting them.*

G. Taxes ought to be laid and collected in the

manner most agreeable to the people that pay them.

P. The thing speaks for itself. Suppose I agree to allow you, some time hence as soon as I can spare it, twenty pounds to dispose of as you please; would it be proper for you to go immediately, put yourself into a present condition of want by your extravagance, and borrow seven pounds of the carpenter, seven of the gardener, seven of the miller, and seven of the brewer, in all twenty-eight, and to oblige me to let the first fell timber to pay himself, the second pillage my garden, the third cut and carry my wheat, and the fourth my barley, in consideration of the debt and the interest, and the favour of advancing the money, and so on?

G. It would be a cruel conspiracy, and our having power to effect it would not change its nature.

P. The most odious tax in this country is the excise, the most expensive in collecting, the most injurious to trade and home consumption, and the least consistent with our free constitution. The most safe and proper tax is the land-tax, and the most agreeable is the postage of letters.

G. We always pay this tax with pleasure at school when we receive letters from home.

P. The carriage of letters is really a business in the hands of government, and the profits are the tax. The people pay it cheerfully, because they have something for their money.

G. Would it be difficult to exchange some of our most offensive taxes which hurt trade by trans-

ferring the property of the industrious into the hands of the idle, into other taxes similar to that of postage?

P. I think not. There are modes which would be more productive to government, and really advantageous to the people.

G. Is not the *influence* of taxation a considerable object?

P. Unquestionably. Taxes have an influence on government, elections, trade, industry, learning, genius, men and manners, and every thing else in a country; even the poultry have less food for the dearness of corn.

G. Is it not very much in our power to diminish the influence of taxation in regard to ourselves?

P. It is. You have an instance in this family. When you were a little boy, you remember wine brought to table after dinner?

G. I do; but I see none now, and I think the family full as well and as happy without it.

P. I believe it is. I hated the war; set the task-master, who taxed us to support it, at defiance, and got money and virtue by the taxes. The minister laid an additional duty on wine: we left off wine. He taxed spirits: your mother ordered rum and brandy to be put among the medicines. He taxed servants, we dismissed two. Thus as he laid on a tax, we lopped off a luxury, and though the family has increased from five children to twelve, and our income has stood as it was, yet we have not gone, as without these

precautions we must have gone, either into debt or ruin.

G. The minister did not acquire your esteem by taxation.

P. He filled me with pity and horror. The state of the sugar trade alone was sufficient to excite emotions of this kind. To see brown muscovado sugars from 26 shillings a hundred, the price in 1775, rise to 70 shillings a hundred, the price in 1779. To see only 106 sugar houses, and some of them to be let in the city of London, where a few years before 159 were at work: to see coppersmiths, blacksmiths, plumbers, iron-founders, back-makers, potters, coopers, carters, builders of every description, all supported by these houses, unemployed: to see the immense consumption of coals and candles, scarcely to be equalled in any other trade, all stopped: to see the import decay no less than 45,000 hogsheads a year; to see ruin in a thousand ways attendant on all this, was enough to make a harder heart than mine bleed.

G. These were influences you could not prevent, and they are justly chargeable on taxation, for no money for the minister, no war for the nation.

P. If we were to proceed to the actual *application*, and the *end* of taxation, I should detain you too long. Consider these at your leisure, and now only recollect the substance of what we have said.

The mind, like the hand, in grasping at too much would lose all.

G. People in civil society, you say, have a *right* to their own property: but they ought to give up a part for the preservation of the rest. This part ought to be *freely* given for *just and necessary causes* both domestic and foreign, of which the givers or their deputies are competent judges. The *quantity* given ought to bear a proportion to the *ability* of the proprietors, and to the *importance* of the end to be obtained. British taxes are in great part *interest* of money already expended. The *method of obtaining* them has neither been honourable nor just; but the people have the remedy in their own hands. The *mode of laying and collecting* some of them has not been the most eligible: but even this is remediable. The *influence* will be as extensive as the sums; and if the sums be enormous they will have an enormous influence on trade, government, and every thing else. The *application* is not always to the purposes for which they were raised, and the original *end* and design for which taxation is allowed in a free state is totally defeated. Is not this the substance, Sir?

P. It is.

G. Is there no calling a wasteful steward to account?

P. Hah! have you found that out? Well, Responsibility to-morrow.

SATURDAY.

RESPONSIBILITY.

P. SO you think people in public trusts are accountable to their constituents?

G. Can any man assign a good reason why they should not?

P. What can a poor scholar do, who has nothing but his own lips to live on? He must learn to find reasons for every thing, even reasons for not reasoning at all.

G. I do not think much reasoning necessary on this subject.

P. Nor I, if the subject be properly stated. Responsibility, or responsibleness, if you will, is a state of obligation to answer, or account. I should choose to distribute this subject into parts by distinguishing objects, and to simplify each part by a familiar question.

G. Be it so.

P. First, then, let us consider a *private trust*, natural and civil. I look upon you, and the rest of my children, as committed to my trust by the God of *nature;* and I consider myself as accoun-

table, or responsible, for my discharge of this trust, both to God and you. It is a motive of my care. When you became a man, what would you think of me if I had neglected or abandoned you?

G. I should not be able to reverence you in such a case. In a desert I should despise you; perhaps, left to native ferocity, I should avenge myself.

P. But as you were not born in a desert, but in Britain, my natural obligation is confirmed by a *civil* tie. Suppose I had abandoned you in infancy, or disease, or impotence?

G. The law would have provided for me, and would have punished you.

P. Is this an excellence in our law, or a defect?

G. An excellence undoubtedly; for though the civil motive is no motive to you, yet there are too many who have no motive but that.

P. Responsibility is a motive both to me and them; responsibility to man moves them; to God me. What is a *publick trust?*

G. It consists of that, which men give up for living in society.

P. You mean, men retain some of their natural rights in civil society, and they put the rest in trust.

G. So I understand it. The honour and dignity of being chief, is given up in trust to one, who is so much the more sovereign, as the sovereign rights of many are lodged in him.

P. Then honour is in publick trust.

G. Yes, and so is wealth and power; and so it should seem, are all the other rights of mankind in a free state.

P. They are not annihilated, then; you do not mean by giving up, giving up the ghost?

G. No certainly. You have not given up the right of killing a man, have you, Sir?

P. No; I have only put that right of self-defence into the hands of the legislature, and they shoot the French, and drown the Spaniards, if they attempt to invade my estate on the coast; and they seize, imprison, try, and hang my neighbour for me if he attempts my life.

G. Suppose the persons in trust should abuse their trust, and should seize you or your property, instead of the French and the highwayman?

P. I should think I ought to resume my right, and put it into honest hands. You do not think men give up their senses to their governors in trust.

G. No, certainly; and what they do give up are entrusted, not alienated.

P. Publick trusts, then, are in their nature, and ought to be in every form of civil government, in a state of responsibility.

G. As far as publick trusts are greater and more important than private trusts, so much more reason is there that the holders of them should be responsible.

P. I ask then a third question. Can there be a safe good government without responsibility?

G. What is a good civil government?

P. That, of every form, in which the end of civil government is obtained—that is, civil and religious liberty.

G. If it were formed ever so well, it would soon degenerate into tyranny, without responsibility.

P. How so?

G. Because, constitute a civil government of what you will, and that part which is left without controul, will, on that very account, rise above, and domineer over the rest.

P. It would, and you see there would be no remedy. The end, liberty, would be defeated by the means, government. I am always, therefore, astonished, when I hear men talk of absolute and uncontroulable sovereignty in a prince, omnipotence in a parliament, despotism somewhere in a state; they convince me of nothing except that they understand the way up stairs.

G. Has the British constitution responsibility in it?

P. I intended to come to this as a fourth question. It has the reputation of it; for every writer who praises our government, praises it because one component part is a check on another, and if this be not the check, I know not where to find it.

G. But have we not many examples in our history of the peoples' calling their administrators to account, and punishing them for breach of trust?

P. Suppose we had not one, what then?

G. Then we should want precedent.

P. But should we be left without law? There must have been a first time, in the history of the

world, of calling culprits of every kind to account.

G. True; but I recollect several instances of it in our history.

P. Every body knows a great many cases, in which the executive power has been called to account, by means of indictments and parliamentary impeachments.

G. The executive power?

P. Yes; not the king in his own person; but his counsellors and wicked ministers, without whose instrumentality the king cannot misuse his power; and in this stands the wisdom of our maxim of ascribing perfection to the supreme governor. Could the person of the supreme governor be culpable in the eye of the law, he might be arrested, imprisoned, tried and condemned, and then the remedy would be worse than the disease, the bonds of government would be dissolved, and civil war would ensue: but as he executes his high office by administration, and as all his servants are obliged to act according to law, the punishment of the servants answers every end of safety to society, for they know it is at their peril to take the prince's will instead of law for a rule of action. Beside, if the person of the supreme governor in such a state as ours were capable of culpability, the danger of calling him to account would be so great, by reason of the powerful opposition he would be always able to make, that no person would dare to attempt it, for fear of consequences to himself, and the law would defeat itself; it would be governing too much: but in the present state, the

calling of an administator to account is comparatively easy, and answers all the ends necessary to the happiness of society.

G. I believe it is allowed by all, that the three parts of our governing powers are mutually accountable to each other, and there are many instances of each calling the other to account, so that some of our kings have been dethroned, one fled from the fury of the people, and abdicated the throne, and one was actually put to death.

P. None of them understood the true principles of our constitution. The last took an active personal part in oppressive and illegal measures, as going to the house to seize the members, and though there was an informality in his trial, yet that as well as many other parts of our history shew, that there is a line beyond which the people cannot bear oppression, and that right to call rulers to account was always understood to belong to the people.

G. Allowing right, is there law for the exercise of the right?

P. Never was right of resistance more clearly ascertained, and passive obedience and non-resistance more fully exploded in any nation than in ours at the revolution; the whole went on the principle of responsibility, and the same act of settlement, that vested succession to the crown in the present illustrious family, was in effect an act of rejection, not of an administration, but of a person and a family, who had, by presuming to set themselves above controul, dissolved that social

bond, by which they and their constituents were connected.

G. Did the legislative power in our constitution call the executive to account in their own right, or in that of the people?

P. In that of the people, certainly.

G. Then the people have a right to call them to account?

P. Who can doubt it? But there is one question more concerning *expedience.*

G. I understand you, Sir. Granting that responsibility is a natural state of right, and that it is allowed and incorporated in our government, and that we have both law and precedent to confirm it, yet it would still remain a question, when is it expedient to make use of this right?

P. I mean exactly so. The expedience of such a measure is a conclusion which ought to be drawn from a great many cool, deliberate, well-weighed premises. Do you think this the time?

G. By no means.

P. Why.

G. Because under such an administration as the present, (I only take the liberty to repeat what you said last night at supper to my uncle) composed of as great and good statesmen as ever adorned this, or any other country, we may expect the radical evils, that have accidentally crept into our government, to be thoroughly cleared away. You said, their wisdom, application and fidelity, were equal to the government of half a world.

P. I spoke as I thought, and I own I expect

from their beneficent hands not a temporary quietus, but substantial and lasting improvements, founding in our liberty the happiness of posterity, and an immortality of reputation to themselves.

G. Suppose you should be deceived?

P. It is not to be supposed.

G. May we not for argument sake imagine the worst?

P. Imagine the worst. Suppose only a few popular acts done to ingratiate administration with the people, and no attempts made to restore to the people at large that equal and universal representation, that purity of the democratical part of our constitution, to which we have an indubitable right, and which is a certain and effectual relief for many of the ills of which we so openly complain. Suppose all this, what then?

G. Why then where is your power to enforce responsibility?

P. Where it always was, in the people themselves.

G. But by what exertions?

P. By a general, calm, peaceable, but firm and resolute declaration of right. Governors know the people must be heard, when they are unanimous and firm. You have supposed a case or two, give me leave in my turn to suppose one founded on a fact. There was once a parliament in England, which expressly gave to royal proclamations the force of law. Suppose a modern parliament should do so?

G. I should say they were guilty of breach of trust, and had subverted the constitution.

P. You would say, with the great Locke, that *there remains at all times inherent in the people,* A SUPREME POWER *to alter or remove the legislative, for when they find the legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them, the trust is abused and forfeited, and devolves to those who gave it.*

MONDAY.

GENERALISSIMO.

G. A Generalissimo is a supreme commander.

P. Of what?

G. I thought of the military: but my uncle has puzzled me. I went to his room this morning as usual to pay my respects to him, and to enquire after his health; and, among other things, he said, George, ask your father who is general of the excise army, and who is Lord of hosts, or general of the church army, and desire him to inform you who raises, and officers, and animates, and pays these troops, who keep garrison, who take the field, to whom they swear, and for whom they fight?

P. I understand him. He loves a little mirth.

G. The generalissimo of our contemplation is the supreme commander of the military and maritime force?

P. Yes; and it is this force, chiefly the military, and particularly in the state of a standing army, that we intend to examine. Let us go to the bottom of the subject: on what principle is force necessary to a free state?

G. On the great leading principle the happiness of the state.

P. Of the whole state?

G. Certainly, not of a part of it.

P. How does force contribute to this happiness?

G. By placing the state in a condition of safety from foreign attempts to injure it.

P. Then armies are not intended in a free state to operate on the people who employ them?

G. No; it is impossible to suppose a people capable of choosing to be dragooned.

P. Then you are no friend to a standing army?

G. Pardon me, Sir, the question is complex, and I am not yet master of all the ideas that compose it. Army stands for ten thousand, and army stands for a hundred thousand men. If a country be so extended as to require a hundred thousand men to defend it, then I am a friend to a standing force of a hundred thousand men: but if a country requires only ten thousand men to defend it, then I should think the other ninety thousand might be better employed.

P. I see you have a rule of proportion in your mind. You first think, what is the use, the end and design of an army; you next determine the just and proper quantum necessary to answer the end, which is the guard of the inhabitants of a district of a given size, and subject to such and such injuries; and having determined how many men are necessary to this purpose, you think the rest superfluous.

G. Yes; and I think a superfluity of armed men is a superfluity of fire, active in its nature, and therefore dangerous.

P. Where is the danger of twenty or thirty thousand superfluous men in arms?

G. They must all be fed and clothed, and paid, they must have arms and ammunition, and all this expence falls on the people. Is not this an injury to property?

P. Do you see any other inconvenience?

G. Men unemployed contract habits of idleness or profligacy, and both are injurious to the morals of a state.

P. Do you think morality of consequence to a state?

G. There is a set of just and proper actions essential to its prosperity, yea, to its existence. There is a set of domestick virtues essential to the peace of a family; a set of trade virtues essential to the prosperity of commerce; there is a set of political virtues essential to the glory of a kingdom; and there is a set of religious virtues essential to the worship of Almighty God. I have been taught so.

P. Is an unemployed army remarkable for these virtues?

G. I am sorry to say quite the reverse.

P. To omit the rest, is a standing army friendly to political virtue?

G. How can a standing army befriend political virtue, when a standing army is under the absolute command of one single general, and when submission to orders is the indispensable law of every individual?

P. The connections that make a slave make a tyrant!

G. Forgive me a moment. Old nurse Piper came yesterday to see her child as she calls me.

P. Well.

G. I inquired how her son did, and she fell a crying. O! exclaimed she, he is ruined, and we are all undone! He was the kindest creature in the parish before he went into the militia; but now he has lost every good quality, and has brought home nothing but an order, an oath, and a blow.

P. Had the old woman read history, she might have illustrated the doctrine of orders, and oaths, and blows, by the ruin of many a kingdom, if that would have comforted her. However, you distinguish between a militia raised for temporary defence, or a few troops kept in lieu of them for the same purpose, and a standing army.

G. I do; I allow the necessity of the first on a principle of self preservation; I dislike the last for many reasons, and one is because it makes arms a profession.

P. You think it an unlawful profession?

G. I do; for a man to give himself up to learn the art of destroying his fellow creatures, and to let himself out for hire to destroy whomsoever his commander shall doom to destruction, and this without retaining a right to judge of the justice or injustice of the order, and to make a merit of implicit obedience in such a bloody business, argues the soul of a slave, and is never found general,

till a nation has sunk into the lowest degree of political depravity.

P. So much for principles; let us come to facts. "Our constitution knows no such state as that of a perpetual standing soldier, bred up to no other profession than that of war; and it was not till the reign of Henry VII. that the kings of England had so much as a guard about their persons." These are the words of Judge Blackstone.

G. What is the present constitutional force for the safety and defence of the kingdom?

P. The militia, consisting of a certain number of the inhabitants of every county chosen by lot for three years, and officered by the Lord Lieutenant of the county, the deputy lieutenants, and the principal landholders, under a commission from the crown.

G. But we have a standing army in time of peace.

P. We have: but so jealous have our legislators been, that they are actually disbanded at the expiration of every year, unless continued by parliament.

G. Are all these forces entrusted with the crown?

P. All; and a great and important trust it is.

G. How are they regulated?

P. By an annual act of parliament, called the Mutiny Bill, an act as inconsistent with the free constitution of this country as can be conceived.

G. How so.

P. By this act, a soldier disobeying the lawful commands of his superior officer is doomed to suf-

fer such punishment as a court martial shall inflict, though it extend to death itself.

G. Who appoints this court martial?

P. The crown.

G. And by what law do that court judge.

P. By articles of war formed by his majesty.

G. In this case the crown is entrusted with both legislative and executive power absolute?

P. Exactly so.

G. Is not the military then in a state of servitude, and is not their slavery dangerous to our liberty?

P. I think so.

G. What reconciles our nobility and gentry to this state of subjection to arbitrary power?

P. Perhaps dissipation, which renders the pay necessary. Perhaps ambition, which always runs the road of honour. Perhaps fashion, which seldom consults reason. Perhaps their opinion of the mild character of the king, who, they trust, will not make an unkind use of his power.

G. How could armies be governed without severe laws? Were soldiers allowed to examine the orders of their superiors before they executed them, the delay might occasion great damage?

P. Sometime ago your uncle, who loves horses, complained to your mother, that though he kept three fine hunters, yet he could not ride with any pleasure to himself, or with safety to his life and limbs. She did not inquire what made the horses unma-

nageable, for she knew it was owing to little exercise and high keeping; but she asked him why he kept three for his own riding when he rode but little, and never more than one at a time. He took the hint, disposed of two, and now rides safe and easy.

G. Suppose a nation long habituated to keep a standing army, many families interested in the continuance of one, and laws to perpetuate it?

P. I reply in the language of one of the greatest ornaments of this age. "*All the nations now in the world, who, in consequence of the tameness and folly of their predecessors, are subject to arbitrary power, have a right to emancipate themselves as soon as they can.*"

TUESDAY.

AGGRANDISEMENT.

P. WHAT is the support of grandeur, George?

G. Riches, Sir.

P. And what of riches?

G. Trade.

P. And what of trade?

G. A good market.

P. If then old farmer Davis have a good market for his wool, and corn, and cattle, and butter and cheese, he can afford to pay his landlord more rent, and to lay out more money with tradesmen, than if he had no way to dispose of his produce?

G. Certainly.

P. And the tradesmen can afford to pay a higher rent for their shops and houses with Davis's custom than without it?

G. No doubt.

P. The landlord will have a larger income, and can afford to contribute more to his own and the national grandeur?

G. Clearly.

P. Does it not seem, then, that the grandeur of

a state rises naturally out of its wealth, its wealth out of commerce, and its commerce out of consumption.

G. It should seem so.

P. Three articles, then, present themselves to our view as worthy of national attention; the production, the preparation, and the consumption of marketable commodities.

G. Each, I perceive already, an article of considerable magnitude.

P. And therefore the more worthy of our investigation. By the subject of our conversation, marketable commodities, I mean any thing that will fetch money; gold and clay, timber and trinkets, animals and vegetables, materials raw and manufactured; the list would fill a volume.

G. I suppose Great Britain of the staple articles of universal traffic is the most productive country in the world.

P. *Is*, did you say? Have you forgotten your tour with me last summer into Scotland and Wales?

G. I beg pardon: I ought to have said, *might be.*

P. What I inquire is this, do the lands and the quarries, the forests and the mines, the rivers and the coasts, produce what they might be made to produce with proper management?

G. By no means?

P. What is the chief cause?

G. I imagine there are several causes: but the principal, probably, is poverty.

P. In few and partial cases an estate may be unproductive from inattention, ignorance, negligence, dissipation, indolence, and so on: but in cases of this magnitude, private fortunes are not equal to the undertakings with any probability of success. Great objects like these require national efforts, parliamentary aids, noble exertions. Had a few of the millions wasted in war, been employed in these beneficial purposes, Britain might have been by this time a garden of pleasure, a storehouse of plenty!

G. So, we have spent millions to conquer deserts at the end of the globe, and left a fruitful country to become a desart at home.

P. Of thirty-nine millions of acres in England, near ten millions, or a fourth part of the whole consists of heaths, moors, mountains, and barren lands, and this exclusive of woods, forests, parks, commons and roads. Were these recovered to the growth of grain, hemp, flax, hops, rape, saffron, potatoes, and so on, or to the support of animals of any kind in the greatest quantities they could bear, I should call all this *production.*

G. Ten millions of acres is a colony, and the cultivation of it attainable without blood, with half the number of men employed to shed it, and at a small expence all returnable to the community, and vested ultimately in the state.

P. In spite of neglect, and in spite of all the obstacles to improvements, which remnants of the the old feudal system oppose against them, our country is rich in the production of marketable

commodities, and these several of them, such as we now fetch from foreign markets.

G. I suppose, you think, Sir, we might turn the scale, and carry our productions to their markets.

P. This implies what I call *preparation*. If you could open a lead mine, or set up a pottery, you would soon see a town rise round it. Grow hemp or flax, and spinners and weavers will surround you, and prepare it for market, and the same may be said of almost all raw materials. Industrious manufacturers enrich a state both by their labour and consumption; but these arts flourish only under mild and serene governments, where labourers and artists are secured and set at ease in their liberties and properties, and where their honest endeavours are not blasted by burdensome taxes.

G. What you call preparations include not only manufactures, but all things necessary to be done in order to bring productions to market?

P. Exactly so. Our manufactures, both of domestick and foreign materials, as wool, leather, metals, linens, cotton, glass, paper, and so on, may all be extended much further than they are, and with infinite advantage to the state.

G. And the increase of them would increase land and water carriage, and all the workmen and materials necessary to both; and, above all, seamen and shipping, the defence and glory of Britain.

P. Undoubtedly: but there is one fatal mistake which lies at the bottom of all our ill policy in these articles, and that is, that *necessity* is the principle which sets the poor a working.

G. What is the true principle of the industry of the poor?

P. *Encouragement.* Restraints of trade should be removed—duties taken off—prices of raw materials reduced—bounties judiciously distributed—exportation promoted—immunities from some public offices or services granted—and so on. All these require great and national aids.

G. Perhaps the state cannot afford these great aids?

P. Suppose I kept a nominal gardener, whose place was a sinecure, with a salary of three hundred a year, could not I dismiss him, and afford to employ two hundred a year to set the poor to work till they could support themselves, and save a hundred a year myself too?

G. You think, then, that it is not the poverty of the state, but the misapplication of public money, that keeps this poor country in its present dejected state?

P. What signifies what I think? All wise men in England who are not interested in living upon public money, and, to their immortal glory, some who are, think so.

G. I have heard say, that the destruction of the youth of this country proceeds from their fixing their eye on public money.

P. I believe it. How much money, think you,

do the inhabitants of this kingdom pay annually in taxes?

G. I cannot tell.

P. I question whether any body can, but the most probable calculation is about twelve millions.

G. Twelve millions!*

P. Patience! I have not done. More than twelve millions are paid directly, and indirectly at least a fourth more, in all fifteen millions a year, a sum equal to the whole specie of the kingdom.

G. By indirect payments you mean such additions to the prices of commodities as are made by what dealers lay on, and other incidents occasioned by taxes?

P. I do, beside the loss to the public of the labour of all such as are employed in taxation, and other such articles.

G. Do you include in this estimate poor rates, county rates and tithes?

P. No, I do not, all these are to be added.

G. At this rate the nation ought to have upwards of sixty millions of specie to carry on trade: but if it has not twenty, how does it support itself?

P. As a merchant supports himself when he has not property equal to his commerce; by credit and paper currency.

G. Happy for him that his creditors do not all run upon him at once; till they do, he can borrow of you to pay me.

P. His wisdom is, to preserve his credit by fru-

*Upwards of *thirty millions* are now(1805) annually paid in direct taxes; exclusive of some heavy war taxes.

gality, industry, and improvement. Give a man of these qualities time and means, and he will surmount all suspicion, and realize a property that originally was nominal.

G. My uncle is so eager for œconomy as a ground of plenty, that he says, when a bishop goes to heaven he would not appoint a successor, but would put the profits of the bishoprick into the hands of a committee, under the inspection of proper officers, to be employed for the encouragement of trade and manufactures, and so he would go on to the last of the bench. He calls this reduction of crown influence, and improvement in trade.

P. Ay, he says, that though the church constitution is the best in the world, yet that mankind would rather live well and get money without it, than starve to death for want of employment under it. He would find employment for every living thing, and turn even a bench of bishops into a board of trade.

G. How many inhabitants may I suppose there are in Great Britain?

P. About seven millions.

G. And how many employed in directing, inspecting, collecting, spending, and living on the publick revenues obtained by the industry of the rest?

P. A greater multitude than you would at first glance suppose, the far greater part of which ought to be employed in contributing some way or other to the productions of the state: but these people call themselves the grandeur of the state, and say,

they produce the publick good by consuming our property, and making us look great.

G. Is there not a reciprocal dependency between the interest of land and trade?

P. Take the pen, and write as I dictate, and you will soon see what advantages arise from a hundred broad cloths sent to Turkey, and the returns made in raw silk unmanufactured for our own home consumption.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Suppose a clothier buys at market 50 packs of wool, picked and sorted, at 10l. per pack	500	0	0
With which wool he makes 100 broad cloths; and the manufacture thereof in cording, spining, weaving, milling, dressing, &c. as they are usually brought to, and sold white at Blackwell Hall, will amount to about the first cost of the wool	500	0	0
So that these 100 cloths are sold by the clothier to the merchant at 10l. per cloth	1000	0	0
And the merchant pays for dyeing of the said 100 cloths 1-third part in grain colours, at 7l. and two thirds in ordinary colours at 30s. per cloth	333	6	8
Also for setting, drawing, pressing, packing, &c. 15s. per cloth	75	0	0

The said 100 cloths will cost the merchant 14l. 1s. 8d. per cloth on board, which amounts to	1408	6	8
And, to repay him their cost and charges here, and their charges abroad, with a bare allowance for insurance, and the interest of his money, they cannot purchase less, I should think, than 22 great pounds of sherbaffee, or Persia fine raw silk, for every cloth.			
Thus he probably receives, for the said 100 cloths, 2200 pounds weight of the said raw silk			
Now, if the half part of this silk is wrought up into plain coloured tabbies, the manufacturers will receive 13s. 7d. per pound	747	1	8
And, if the other half part is wrought up into rich flowered silks brocaded, the manufacturers will receive 1l. 19s. 9d. per pound	2186	5	0
And the additional charge of dyeing, suppose but of 1-eighth part of the silk, into grain colours, at 9s. per pound	123	15	0
Then the cost and charges of 100 woollen cloths, shipped from London to Turkey, and the ma-			

nufacture of the raw silk brought from thence in return thereof, must amount to	4465	8	4
The freight of the said 100 cloths, and of the said 2200 pounds of raw silk, is computed at	40	12	6
Customs on the said 2200 pound of raw silk at	156	15	0
English factor's commission abroad on the sale of the cloth, and on investing the returns in silk as aforesaid, computed at	100	0	0
It is here clearly represented to the view of the reader, that every 2200 pound weight of raw silk imported from Turkey, and manufactured here for our consumption, without paying any thing to the merchant's or mercer's gain, pays to the landholders, the labourers, and the crown, the sum of	4762	15	10

If any thing is to be added for the merchant's and the mercer's gain, and we may depend upon it they will not be at the trouble of driving their trades for nothing, we may very well affirm, that the whole cost of this manufacture for consumption, cannot be less than 5000l. so that 2200 pounds weight of Turkey raw silk, manufactured

here, pays the sum of 5000l. to the subsistence of our own people.

This account takes the return upon 100 cloths exported to Turkey, and makes them pay 5000l. to the subsistence of our people; but we have heretofore exported annually two hundred times as many cloths for Turkey, and received for about half that quantity of cloth, the same kind of returns in raw silk for our own consumption; and consequently, our own consumption of Turkey silk paid for the subsistence of our people the sum of 500,000l. *per annum*, besides what is paid by the other half of that trade.

But if the consumption of 5000*l.* value of Turkey silk manufactured pays 500*l.* to the landed interest, for the wool that is exported to Turkey in manufacture, then the annual consumption of 500,000*l.* value of that silk must pay 50,000*l.* *per annum* to the landed interest.

And yet this is not all that the landed interest might receive annually by means of this half-part of the Turkey trade; the crown and the subjects, who receive nine times as much for customs and labour, pay, perhaps, a ninth part of what they receive to the landed interest for cloaths and provisions, by which means the consumption of Turkey silk manufactured in England, either directly or indirectly, pays a fifth part of its whole value to the landed interest; that is, it pays directly one tenth part of the value of the silk by the woollen manufacture exported, and as much more by enabling the people to purchase necessary cloaths and pro-

visions, of which as much more is paid to the landed interest.

Now what a condition would the lands be in if it were not for this trade? The poor must come to the parish and the lands for a maintenance. The heavier the rates, the less the tenants can afford to pay the landlord, consequently his land is not worth so much.

G. You mentioned *consumption*, Sir?

P. Consumption is an article of most amazing magnitude, and it is greatest in things of least value, because they lie within every body's reach. It renders the most inconsiderable articles of great consequence first to private œconomy, then to commerce, and last to policy. The materials of one ox set a thousand people to work. The butcher, the tanner, the horner, the tallow-chandler are only heads of several classes of tradesmen and artists, who manufacture the different materials in ten thousand different fashions, and all productive, because cheapness tempts consumption. Of beeves, London consumes at least one hundred thousand a year, and of calves double the number: of butter sixteen millions of pounds, of cheese twenty one millions, of milk forty millions of pints, and four hundred thousand a year, it is said, the metropolis pays for eggs.

G. The more a nation consumes of these articles the more can the owners of them afford to expend in articles of convenience and elegance.

P. Hence circulation of money, which is that to

the prosperity of a nation, which the motion of the blood is to the health of the human body.

G. May not too great rapidity of motion destroy the machine, which motion in some degree is necessary to preserve? Ought not trade to have its natural course?

P. Certainly; and hence the necessity of that encouragement of trade in the governing power in a state on which its prosperity depends. It should neither be neglected, obstructed, or clogged, nor should it be attenuated and diverted, and forced: but it should be eyed, its natural motions and directions humoured and eased, and it should be more cherished for its indirect but real profusion of general profit, than for any immediate farthing advantages to a few individuals, for the sake of a few taxes, to carry on a few measures, of no consequence to the world, and of general loss to the state.

G. What may one suppose the God of nature to have formed Britain for, dominion, or trade?

P. Trade. The whole island is a fine field that wants nothing but cultivating, and if cultivated would overflow with plenty. Holland is a little shop; Britain is a large warehouse, and might manufacture for half the world: but they are industrious while we are idle, and their children make playthings for ours to break. We say the religion of the Dutch is to get money. Do you know what the Dutch say our religion is?

G. No.

P. Bragging and fighting.

G. My uncle says, the twenty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel was written by a Dutchman, or by a man under Dutch prejudices, wailing and lamenting as if all was lost, when nothing was gone except TRADE.

WEDNESDAY.

EMIGRATION.

P. GEORGE!

G. Sir!

P. Suppose you were to toss puss into the fire!

G. Why then she would spring out again.

P. Suppose you should try a less degree of heat, and only scald her with a spoonful out of the spout of the tea-pot?

G. She would scamper away.

P. I'll tell you the reason; she is a brute beast, and neither understands greek nor latin, nor the admirable frame of our excellent constitution, the best constitution in the world, George!

G. The cat, all cat as she is, understands self-preservation, and though she has taken no degree, she has the philosophy of feeling, and knows fire will dissolve the frame of her own constitution.

P. Learnedly spoken! Now turn it into latin.

G. I comprehend you, Sir. To shift quarters is to *emigrate;* and the natives of one country never emigrate to another freely till they feel themselves hurt.

P. Indeed there is a strong attachment to one's native spot, as if one grew out of the soil.

G. That attachment, like all other natural feelings, is a source of virtue, for it impels men to render their own country happy.

P. Suppose one man, or one class of men, should endeavour to render themselves happy by making others miserable, would it not be more natural for the oppressed to flee than to stay?

G. Undoubtedly. The first attachment is to happiness; attachment to a native spot is a secondary bias for the sake of the first.

P. What if men placed their happiness in wealth?

G. They would flee from a country impoverished by taxation.

P. What if they placed it in honour.

G. They would emigrate to governments where they were admissible to publick offices.

P. So, if they placed it in morality, they would flee from states become sinks of profligacy; and if they placed it in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, they would emigrate from civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

G. And who could blame them?

P. Not the cat, if she could speak; but neither the Pope nor Plato has ever had the curing of the cat's raw soul!

G. Who could blame the old puritans for fleeing to America from the tyranny of the bishops and the Stuarts?

P. They were to blame, however, when they got settled there, for persecuting one another. Much has been said of this, and a little of it in some governments was true. Their governing sys-

tems are now formed on a far more liberal plan, and it will be entirely their own faults if they do not frame the largest and the most free empire in the world. Let trade, and not dominion be their object, and they have duration and glory before them.

G. It is said, numbers will emigrate from Europe after the conclusion of the war.

P. The inducements to do so are very many, and very great; but it will be the fault of the governments they quit, if the natives emigrate.

G. what can prevent emigrations, force?

P. Perhaps not: but it would not be prudent to try force.

G. By what means then?

P. By placing the suspected emigrants in a condition of ease. Are they poor? Employ them. Are they deprived of their birthrights? Restore them. Are they afraid? Give them security. Place them at ease, and they will not emigrate. Suppose it were put to your choice: "You are not happy in your situation; you are excluded you say from schools and offices, and subjected to support a class of men, from whom you derive no benefit; you intend to emigrate with your children and property, to enjoy these advantages in a distant clime: you need not do so, we will bestow on you a waste district here at home, take your children, and cattle, and money, and go settle there and cultivate, and build and order yourselves, only give government security for your quiet, and agree to contri-

bute to support the power that protects you. It will never be in your power to injure us, nor will it ever be our interest to injure you." I say suppose such an offer made you, would you choose to accept it?

G. Who can doubt it?

P. This would be only realizing a scheme patronized by the late Lord Godolphin for repeopling the New Forest in Hampshire with the poor refugees from the Palatinate: the spot was near Lindhurst, in the road from Romsey to Lymington. These people were to be put into possession of 4000 acres, distributed into 20 lots, and were to be exempt from rent and taxes for 20 years, taking care, however, of their own sick and poor, and repairing their own roads. 200*l.* ready money was to be advanced to each lot, with allowances of timber, and some other privileges, and at the end of 20 years each lot was to pay 50*l.* yearly to the crown.

P. No damage could have come to the state from this people's ignorance of priesthood and tithes, but great advantages would have arisen from their industry, and a rich repayment of the loan.

P. I have only aimed, George, in all these conversations to give you a few outlines. It remains with you to fill them up: I can have no motives but such as become a man and a christian to have. If you relish these first principles, crude, indigested, and off-hand as they may be, you may meet with ample gratification in many authors from whom I

have borrowed. There are however, a few reflections, which, before we part, I would most earnestly recommend to your attention. I cannot express them so well as these authors have expressed them for us. Here are the books. Oblige me, by reading the marked passages. I am going out, I shall leave you to read to yourself, and to make your own remarks.

" When our reason first begins to open, we are talked to for six years together about the future in *rus*, and the supine in *um*, without hearing one word of the perfection and usefulness of the arts, or the industry of people that follow employments by which our lives are supported. When our reason begins to acquire more strength, it is put under the direction of masters, who, after a vast deal of preparation, demonstrate that we have a body, and that there are other bodies round us; or spend whole hours, nay, even days, in proving, that of two propositions contradictorily laid down concerning a possible future which may never happen, the one is determinately true, and the other determinately false, and the like metaphysical jargon."

" The learning to distinguish rightly the productions of the globe which we inhabit, the ties whereby all the people living on it are united, and the various labours they are employed in, are things the most neglected. Every one of us has seen the sail of a windmill, and the wheel of a water-mill in action: we know also, that these machines grind corn, and reduce the bark of trees to powder: but

we know nothing of the structure of them, and can hardly help confounding a carpenter with an hewer of wood."

"We all carry watches in our pockets, but do we know the mechanism of the fusee round which the chain is wound? Do we understand the use of the spiral line which accompanies the balance? It is just the same as to the most common trades: we know the names of them, and no more. Instead of endeavouring to gain a reasonable knowledge of commerce, manufactures, and mechanics, which are the delight and ornament of that society wherein we are to spend our lives; we pique ourselves on attaining all the niceties of quadrille, or bury ourselves in solitude, upon speculations that have no foundation but in our whimsical imaginations. And, if little judgment is shewn in the choice of our pleasures, a still greater want of it will probably appear in our studies. We run after whatever makes the most noise, and the most sensible people are at last obliged to confess, that they repent more the loss of the time they have employed in studying the subtleties and fooleries of the schools, the arts of pedantry, and the crack-brained altercations of enthusiastic zealots, than of what they have spent in the learning of music, which is sometimes an amusement to them."

"The father or mother of a family, the head of a community, a merchant, a lawyer, a justice of peace, or any of those who have the government either of the actions or consciences of others, may

be never the worse for not understanding the monades of Leibnitz, or the disputative bombast of the dogmatists; but there is no one who would not acquit himself better in his employment, were he to acquire a true knowledge of the arts and trades wherein the common people are busied. This kind of philosophy is a thousand times more to be esteemed, than those systems whose inutility is their least fault." Postlethwayt's *Dictionary of Trade and Commerce. Article, Manufacturers.*

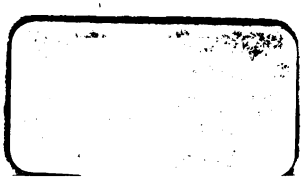
"The principal end of a political survey of any country, is, to point out its capacity, under the regulation of a wise policy, to render the inhabitants thereof independent, potent, and happy. In regard to a matter of this importance, more especially in an age so enlightened as this, assertions are not regarded as arguments, and even arguments, however specious or plausible, if unsupported by facts, are not looked upon as conclusive. As far as rhetoric, panegyric, and all the powers of eloquence could reach, BRITAIN, as we have more than once had occasion to shew, has been as highly celebrated as any country could be. But how much soever such pieces may please, they seldom carry in them any great degree of information, and will by no means furnish any satisfactory answers to objections. In order to accomplish this, it is requisite to pursue another method, to go to the bottom of things, to enter, and even to enter minutely into particulars, and by thus proceeding step by step, to render whatever is affirmed as clear and as certain as possible. It must

be allowed, that this, as well as other countries, hath been subject to very great vicissitudes, and to frequent revolutions, in consequence of which, not only the condition of the inhabitants, but the very face and appearance of the country itself, hath been in different periods greatly altered, which in such a survey ought to be remarked and explained. Many of its natural advantages were at all times too obvious not to be discerned; and yet some of these have never been improved, while others again, passing wholly unnoticed, have been of course totally neglected. But within these two last centuries, since the reformation produced the revival of useful science, the eyes of men have been in a great measure opened; and in consequence of this, much more has been done within that period than in many ages before. These improvements, how great soever, ought only to be considered as so many laudable models, calculated to excite a still stronger principle of public spirit and emulation; as there still remain various of our native prerogatives unexerted, several great resources unexplored, and not a few means yet untried, by which even greater things than have been yet done, might be still effected in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, by prosecuting the aptitude this country has for almost every possible species of improvement, and thereby rendering it the noble and respectable center of as extensive, flourishing, and well governed an empire, as any on which, since launched from the hand of the Creator, the sun has ever shone."

As a basis for such a superstructure, we hazarded some political sketches of the great empires in antiquity, and shewed from facts that such stupendous edifices might be erected; and descending from these to countries, which both in time and situation were less remote, we made it equally evident, that these powers of construction were not confined to any quarter of the globe, or at all restrained to the particular circumstances of soil or climate. But that wisdom and industry, prudence and perseverance, were engines capable of overcoming almost any obstacle, and removing every defect, and even in some cases of converting apparent defects into real advantages. We also ventured to draw the veil a little, and to render it manifest, that THESE AMAZING EFFECTS WERE NOT PERFORMED BY THOSE MYSTERIOUS AND REFINED ARTS WHICH HAVE USURPED THE NAME OE POLICY IN MODERN AGES; BUT BY SIMPLE AND SOLID MAXIMS, INSPIRED BY GENIUS, APPROVED BY REASON, AND CONFIRMED BY EXPERIENCE. From these sprung a system of rule, founded on a few well-weighed principles, suited to the genius and circumstance of the people, and invariably tending to the public good. Institutions, plain, succinct, and agreeable to the natural notions that all men have of justice; by which a sense of shame was made as much as possible to serve instead of punishment. Idleness was proscribed as the infamous mother of vices; benevolence considered as the visible image of virtue;

and industry respected as the parent of independency: which, by affording a comfortable support to private families, maintained order, vigour, harmony, and of course the welfare and stability of the state. In a word, the constitution prescribing their duty to magistrates, the laws controuling the actions of individuals, and the manners diffused from those, either honoured with titles, or trusted with power, conveyed a spirit of obedience through all ranks, from a consciousness that, in pursuing the public weal, they took the best and surest method of pursuing their private interests. By the operations of THESE systems, vast countries became full of people, lodged in cities, towns, and villages; while to furnish those with subsistence, their lands of every kind grew by continual cultivation to look like gardens; but when these were overborne by violence, or undermined by corruption, those lands followed the fate of their inhabitants; and as they relapsed into a state of nature, or which is little better, into a state of servitude, those likewise became, in comparison of what they were, so many wildernesses deformed with ruins." *Dr. Campbell's Political survey of Great Britain.* Vol. I. Sect. IX. page 705.

FINIS.

[END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.]

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